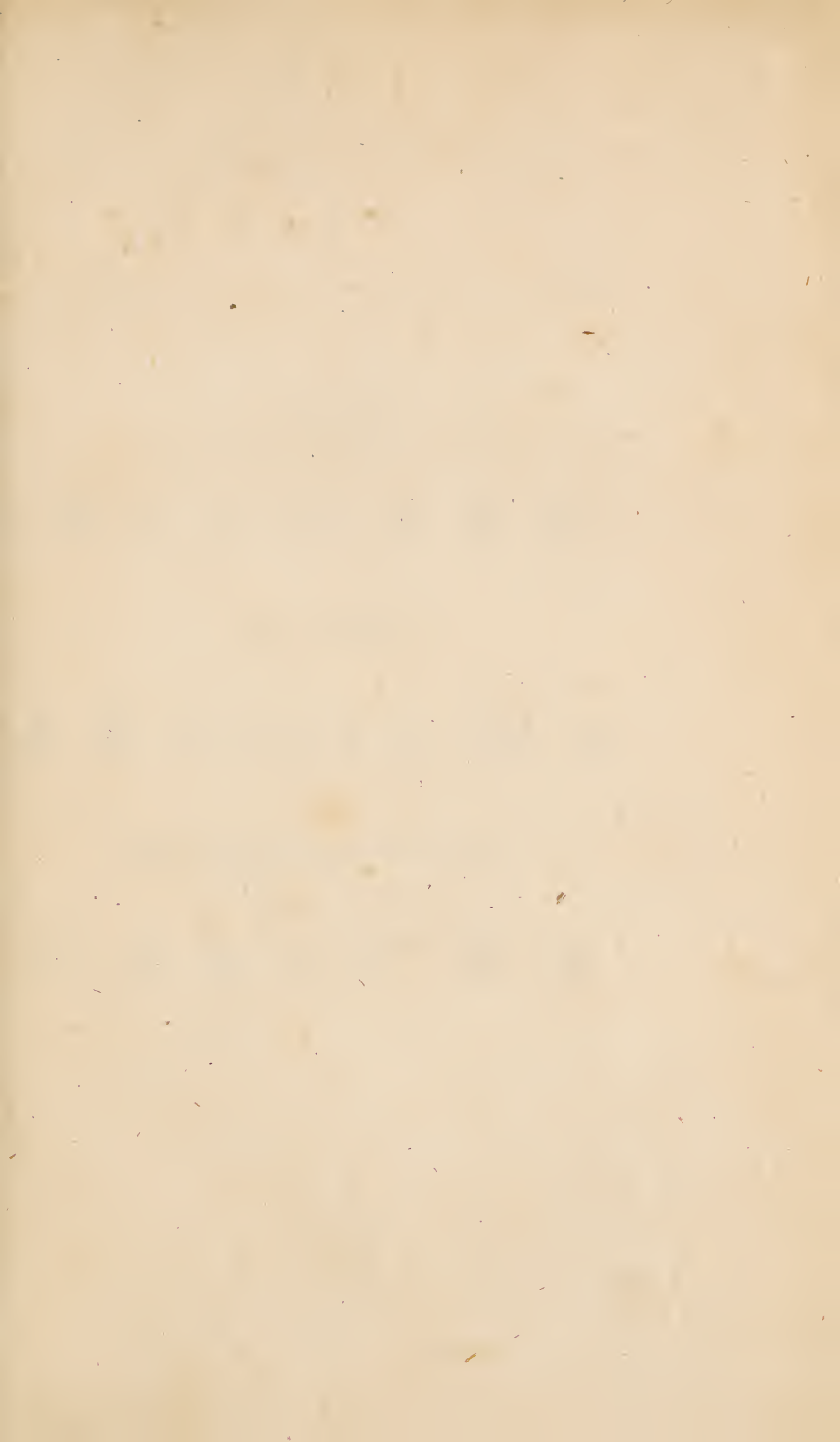


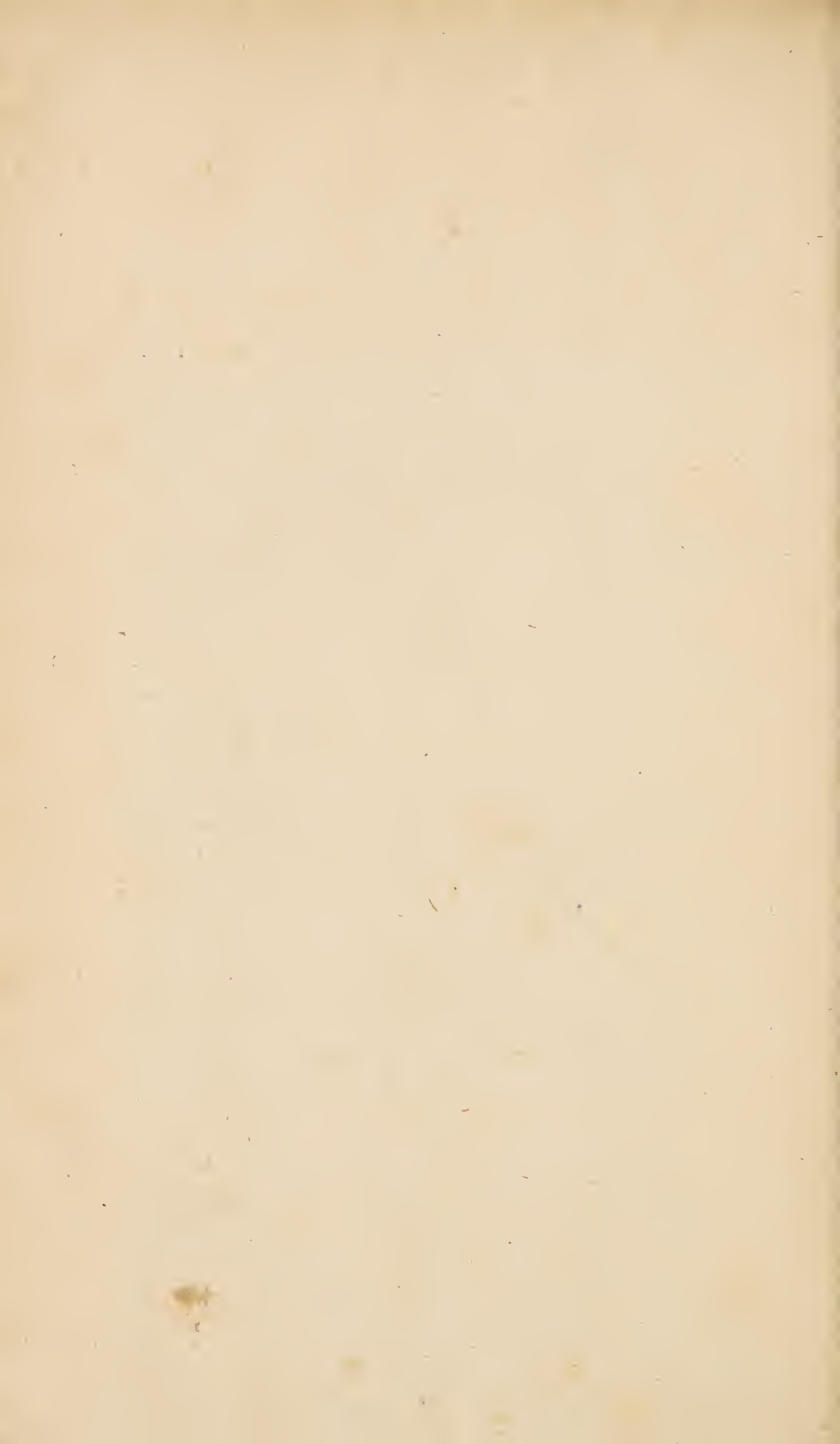
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James B. Gallie.

~~AUGIER~~ DE MARIGNY, François





THE
HISTORY
OF THE
ARABIANS,

Under the GOVERNMENT of the
CALIPH S.



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THE
HISTORY
OF THE
ARABIANS,

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FROM

MAHOMET, their FOUNDER,

TO THE

Death of MOSTAZEM, the fifty-sixth and
last Abassian CALIPH;

Containing the Space of Six Hundred Thirty-six Years.

With NOTES, Historical, Critical, and Explanatory:

Together with

GENEALOGICAL and CHRONOLOGICAL TABLES;

and a complete INDEX to each Volume.

BY THE

ABBÉ DE MARIGNY.

Translated from the FRENCH,

With ADDITIONAL NOTES.

In FOUR VOLUMES.

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THE
HISTORY
OF THE
ARABIANS,
Under the GOVERNMENT of the
CALIPHS.

ALI.

The FOURTH CALIPH.

HITHERTO the Arabians have appeared to be solely intent on making conquests, and propagating and establishing their enthusiastic tenets by force of arms, through the whole extent of their dominions: But during the reign of the present Caliph, the scene will appear to be totally changed.

Ali.

Hegyra. 35.
Ch. ær. 655.

Though the Arabians were unanimous in professing the same religion, yet its influence was not so great as to prevent them from falling into feuds and animosities, and even from breaking out into open revolts: The flame of sedition was first lighted during the administration of the unfortunate Othman,

ALI.
Hegyra 35.
Ch. ær. 655.

and the disturbances increased in the time of his successor. The Mussulmen pointed the sword at their own breasts : and thence arose a schism which being strengthened by time, still subsists among the followers of Mahomet.

Such intestine divisions might have intirely overthrown their weak and infant empire : but that mighty hand which at his pleasure dispenses crowns and kingdoms, protected that people in his wrath, and made them his instruments for punishing the shameful lives of the Greeks, and the wicked behaviour of the Christians.

Ali nominated Caliph with great acclamations.

The very day of Othman's death, the whole city of Medina concurred in the choice of his successor. They did not give themselves time to deliberate, but nominated Ali with the loudest acclamations.

As this illustrious Mussulman had formerly fought that dignity with the greatest eagerness, it might have been reasonably concluded he would have accepted it with the utmost pleasure ; and yet when the deputies came to notify his election to him, he started many difficulties, declared he was not disposed to take charge of the Caliphate, and that he would rather serve in the capacity of a vizir, if he might be appointed to that office.

Upon this the deputies became more earnest in their intreaties, and expressed the sense and desires of the whole nation in such strong terms, that at last Ali promised to comply ; upon condition, however, that he should be appointed

appointed in a full assembly of the electors; for he said that they alone were invested with the right of chusing a Caliph, and that any other kind of election would be unconstitutional.

ALI.
Hegyra 35.
Ch. ær. 655.

It was no more than prudence in Ali to observe all necessary formalities on that important occasion; since he would thereby prevent his enemies from disputing his election; which they would certainly have controverted had it been in any respect defective.

At this time there was a very strong party against Ali; among whom were Aïesha Mahomet's favourite wife, Tellah, and Zobeir. These were all his irreconcilable and implacable enemies, and in particular Aïesha, to whom he had done an ill office, which women never forgive*: and indeed she always shewed the most inveterate hatred to him;

* Aïesha, though the best beloved, was not the most constant and faithful of Mahomet's wives. She was publicly called in question for being guilty of adultery. Ali was so imprudent as to intermeddle in the affair and even to give evidence against her. Though Mahomet had sufficient cause to think her guilty, he wisely concealed his sentiments, and declared he thought the accusation was mere calumny; nay he even went farther, he proved it by a revelation which came very opportunely in about a month afterwards to clear up his doubts. It is contained at length in the 24th chapter of the Alcoran, intitled light, on account of the elucidation it gives in so nice an affair.—See also the translation of the Koran by Sale, fol. 288-9, where the story that gave rise to this accusation is inserted at large: but it does not thereby appear that Ali had the least concern either in the accusation or prosecution; on the contrary, the charge is attributed to other persons who are there expressly named.

ALI.
Hegyra 35.
Ch. ær. 655.

and when a Caliph was to be elected, she had so managed as to get him excluded.

Had Ali been opposed by no other enemy than Aïesha, he would have been hard put to it to secure himself from her intrigues and resentment : but Tellah and Zobeir, men of eminence among the Mussulmen, formed pretensions to the Caliphate and were supported by a pretty numerous party. A third pretender had also entered the lists, even in the life-time of the former Caliph, who had some hopes of succeeding, or at least of raising great disturbances, if they should refuse to elect him. It was the famous Moawiyah governor of Syria, who from the importance of his post, and by means of his immense treasures, might have occasioned the greatest troubles if they had given him cause of discontent.

Ali, who perfectly well knew the spirit and power of each of his opponents, was persuaded he should be capable of making head against them, if he could attain the throne ; but he refused to ascend it by any other than the usual means, that he might obviate all pretences for disputing his election.

This reason induced him to require that the electors should assemble and proceed according to law. And they met accordingly. Tellah and Zobir appeared as electors, and concurred with the rest in choosing Ali. Though they were his competitors, the unanimity of votes prevented them from shewing their discontent ; besides, as Ali's party was the strongest
in

in Medina, they feared lest the inhabitants of that city should have punished them for their opposition, before their friends could have been able to assist them.

ALI.

Hegyra. 35.
Ch. ær. 655.

So soon as the election was over, the principal men of Medina came to Ali's house, and there offered to take the oath of fealty to him; but the new Caliph declined accepting of their allegiance in private, and desired that a ceremony of so much importance as the paying of homage, might be performed in open mosque, and in a full assembly of the people.

On the day appointed for that solemnity Ali went in the morning to the mosque, cloathed in a gown of thin cotton, a coarse turban upon his head, his slippers in one hand, and a bow in the other instead of a walking stick. The Mussulmen came in crowds to do homage to their new sovereign; but Ali observing, before the ceremony began, that Tella and Zobeir were not present, sent and desired they would come thither.

Upon their arrival Ali asked them if they disapproved of his election, or whether they honestly meant to take the oath of allegiance to him, for, he added, that if they had any objections to make, he was so far from being fond of the new dignity then offered him, that he would instantly decline it, and take the oath to either of them that would accept the government.

They both refused it, and assured the Caliph that far from being desirous of enjoying

ALI. his post, they would do all that lay in their
 Hegyra. 35: power to make him easy in the possession of
 Ch. ær. 655. it, by swearing with the greatest sincerity and
 submission, to observe the duty which subjects
 owe to their sovereign.

The whole assembly, and Ali in particular, knew what little credit was to be given to the protestations of those two Mussulmen, but no person expressed his distrust, and they proceeded to taking the oath.

At the very time the ceremony was performing, some person present openly made a smart observation, which plainly shewed what opinion they entertained of Tellah's fair promises. It is necessary to be observed that it was a custom among the Arabians for the vassal to give his right hand to the sovereign in token of homage. Tellah's right arm having been shortened by some wounds he had received in battle, when he came to offer it to Ali, he could not reach so far as the others; which occasioned one of the by-standers to say, that it was a bad sign, and like to prove but a lame kind of business that was begun with a lame hand. How far this preface was fulfilled, will appear from the sequel of Ali's history.

Tellah and Zobeir now joined together, and resolved on the Caliph's destruction; but before they proceeded to open force, they strove to draw him into some snare, and endeavoured to deprive him of his dependants,
 and

and such as seemed the most firmly attached to him.

ALI.

Hegyra 35.
Ch. ær. 655.

In a short time after he had taken possession of the sovereign authority, they came to him, repeated their promises of obedience, and made him fresh offers of their service. After these general propositions, they entered into the particulars of what they thought necessary to be done in order to gain the hearts of the people. Amongst other things they insinuated that he ought to revenge the death of Othman, and they offered to assist him with the greatest zeal in that undertaking, wherein, they said, the honour and dignity of his post was nearly concerned.

Tellah and Zobeir persuade Ali to avenge the death of Othman.

What answer soever Ali should give to their proposal, they expected it would equally tend to his destruction. If he had refused, the public would have been confirmed in the suspicions which had been artfully propagated that he had a considerable share in the assassination of the Caliph. On the other hand, had he consented to punish the murderers and their accomplices, he would have incurred the hatred of all Othman's enemies, who were very numerous and powerful, and who, in order to avoid a prosecution, might take such steps as would be highly prejudicial to him.

But Ali artfully eluded the difficulty. He shewed a great inclination to punish Othman's assassins; spoke of their conspiracy as the blackest attempt, and that it ought to be rigorously punished; but he at the same time

Ali's answer.

ALI.
Hegyra 35.
Ch. ær. 655.

represented to them how impracticable it would be, considering the great number of the malecontents, who had all approved of the assassination, and even advised it; that if he punished those who had dared to lift up their guilty hands against Othman, he must also of necessity inflict a most severe punishment on all the accomplices: which would not fail of exciting great disturbances, and perhaps even a civil war, which might end in the ruin of the state.

He added, however, that if they could point out to him those who had actually struck Othman the fatal blows, or would undertake to find them out, he would not be wanting on his part, and would take care to punish the guilty.

As Tellah and Zobeir were unwilling to be personally engaged in so important a matter, they no longer insisted on their proposal; and departed, in all appearance, satisfied with the Caliph's prudent conduct; but in fact not a little disconcerted that he had escaped the snare laid for him.

The conduct of Ali, in striving at the beginning of his reign to gain the affections of the people, and avoid every cause of disturbance, especially at a time when all the members of the state seemed but too much inclined to take violent measures, was most prudent. And had he afterwards behaved with the same caution and wisdom as he shewed in his answer relating to Othman's assassination, he might have

have reasonably hoped for success; but he soon changed his conduct: and that Caliph who was seemingly so circumspect in all his actions which might win the good will of his subjects, in the sequel took those very steps which unavoidably brought on a civil war.

ALI.
Hegyra 35.
Ch. ær. 655.

He resolved to take away the governments of provinces from all those persons that had been appointed by his predecessor. On this design he conferred with Al-Mogeirah-ebn-Said, one of the chief men amongst the Arabians, who with great warmth represented to him that the project would end in his destruction; he earnestly intreated him not to be over hasty in an affair of such importance, and to wait at least till he was more firmly established in his government.

Ali resolves
to displace
the governors
of provinces.

This advice did not please Ali, however he did not issue his orders so soon as he at first intended to have done. The next day Al-Mogeirah made him another visit, and the same matter having been again brought on the tapis, Ali shewed that he had still the same object in view, and he gave Al-Mogeirah to understand that he proposed shortly to put it in execution.

That Mussulman who had so earnestly dissuaded the Caliph from taking a step which in its consequences might be fatal to the state, and to Ali in particular, on a sudden changed his mind, and told him, that having maturely considered what had passed in their last conversation, he thought it would be best for Ali to
proceed

ALI.
 Hegyra 35.
 Ch. ær. 655.

proceed according to his own propofal; for by putting in places of trust perfons he could rely on, he would doubtlefs firmly eftablifh his authority, and caufe it to be duly revered in all the provinces of the muffulman empire.

In the midft of this conference Abdollah-ebn-Abbas chanced to come in, and Al-Mogeirah departing to leave them together, Ali acquainted Abdollah with his defign to change the governors, and at the fame time told him, that Al-Mogeirah had at firft ftrongly oppofed it; but that he had now altered his opinion, which was the caufe of the vifit he had juft paid him.

Abdollah, amazed to find that the Caliph was infenfible of the dangerous fnare that Muffulman had laid for him, told Ali, he ought to weigh his fcheme well before he put it in execution; that the firft advice Al-Mogeirah had given him was good, and worthy a zealous citizen who had the tranquillity of the ftate, as well as of his fovereign at heart; but the laft was the council of a traytor, who probably had fome intereft in raifing difturbances in his country.

He added, that it was his opinion no changes fhould be made; and as he knew the Caliph had particularly in his eye Moawiyah, governor of Syria, he infifted on his being continued in his government; for as that Muffulman had a very ftrong party there, the difmiffing him might occafion a general rifing of
 the

the people in his favour, and occasion the loss of that province.

ALI.

Hegyra 35.
Ch. ær. 655.

Abdollah then told Ali that no trust was to be reposed in Tellah or Zobeir, for it was manifest they had traitorous designs, and he was sure if any insurrection should happen they would be the first to appear in arms against him; wherefore he advised him to continue Moawiyah in his post till he was certain whether or not he would submit to his authority, “and then, says he, leave it to me to bring him from his house neck and heels, which I will do when ever you desire it.”

These sage remonstrances had no effect on the obstinate Ali, who being bent on the execution of his purpose, imprudently dismissed all the governors, and by so extraordinary a change raised deadly feuds in the state, which caused him the greatest uneasiness during his whole reign.

Hegyra 36.
Ch. ær. 656.

The new officers he sent out to the respective provinces were Othman-ebn-Hanif, who was ordered to Bassorah; Ammárah-ebn-Sahál to Cufah; Abdollah-ebn-Abbas to Arabia Fælix; Sahel-ebn-Hanif to Syria; and Saad-ebn-Kais to Egypt.

Of all these governors only one was permitted to take possession of his post; and if some others entered on their government it was not effected without the greatest opposition. Amongst others, Sahel going to Syria, was stopped by a party of horse at Tabúk. The commandant knowing he had been appointed

ALI.
Hegyra 36.
Ch. ær. 636.

pointed governor of Syria, so plainly declared to him how the people of that province stood affected, that he did not think proper to proceed any further. He was told that if any besides Othman had sent him, he might go about his business. Sahel did not chuse to dispute the matter and forthwith returned to Medina.

Kais went into Egypt, where he was opposed by a party of the Othmanians, who refused to submit to Ali's government, till justice was done on the murderers of Othman. The inhabitants of Bassorah and Cufah, bestowed the like kind of treatment on their new governors, and would not even suffer them to enter their territories.

Abodllah established himself in Yaman, and was the only officer that succeeded; but this was attended with no very advantageous consequences; for Yali, who was governor there, by virtue of a commission from Othman, carried off all the money that was in the treasury, and hastening to Mecca delivered the treasure to Aiesha, Tellah and Zobeir.

Ali refuses to give to Tellah and Zobeir the governments they sue for.

The two latter retired from the Caliph's court, on his refusal to employ them at the time he appointed new governors. The one of them sued for the government of Cufah, the other for that of Bassorah (both which were places of very great importance) Ali who knew them too well to put any trust in them, gave them a denial softened by a complement, he told them that he had no body

body about him of so great capacity as they, or with whom he could so properly consult in such emergencies as a new established government was likely to be exposed to. He added, that their abode at court should not be so much lost time to them, and that he would take an opportunity of rewarding them in proportion to their merit and services.

ALI.

Hegyra 36.
Ch. ær. 656.

Ali's promises produced no great effect upon the two Mussulmen. They plainly saw that the Caliph's design was to keep them near him, that he might be a witness to their conduct, and perhaps with a view to make them responsible for such disturbances as might arise at Medina. However, for a time they concealed their sentiments; and so soon as they heard that Aïsha was gone to Mecca, they asked leave to go thither, on pretence of performing the pilgrimage, which was granted. And there, in concert with the prophet's widow, they raised a formidable party, which the Caliph vainly endeavoured to quell. The money which the governor of Yaman had brought them was of singular use in keeping up a correspondence, and gaining friends in all parts, and so artfully did they conduct their plot, that in a short time all Syria broke out into open revolt.

Amongst others they stirred up the Mota-They raise a
zelites, that is to say the Seperatists; (by revolt against
Ali.
which appellation such as disputed Ali's elec-
tion were distinguished.) And they having
by

ALI.
Hegyra 36.
Ch. ær. 656.

by means of their emissaries procured the body of Othman to be taken out of the grave, and got possession of the bloody shirt which he wore when he was assassinated, they made a very advantageous use of it, sometimes it was spread on the pulpit of the mosques, when the people assembled there; and sometimes it was carried in the army as a banner during their march thro' the chief cities of Syria.

This bloody spectacle, daily exposed to open view, had a stronger effect than the most pathetic speeches. The Syrians, who were greatly indebted to Othman's munificence, in a fury took up arms to revenge the death of their benefactor; and only waited till the victim that was to be sacrificed to his memory should be pointed out to them.

Ali applies to
Moawiyah to
acknowledge
him as Caliph.

Ali having received information of the transactions in that province, wrote to Moawiyah in very mild terms. Without mentioning the feuds he had raised in Syria, he only exhorted him to give a proof of obedience, by acknowledging him for Caliph, which he hoped he would the more readily resolve to do, as no illegal means had been used in his election, and as he had been chosen by the unanimous votes of the electors.

Moawiyah, who well knew how Ali was disposed towards him, was unmoved at his letter; he attributed the Caliph's moderation to his want of power; and to shew him how slightly he regarded his remonstrances, instead of returning him an answer, he insulted him
in

in the grossest manner. About three months after Othman's death, he called a messenger to whom he delivered a packet sealed up, and directed thus: "Moawiyah to Ali." Then giving him private instructions, he sent him to Medina, together with Ali's messenger, whom he had detained till that time. According to his orders, he entered Medina in the evening, a time when in that hot climate the streets are the most frequented, for the sake of enjoying the cool air.

ALI.

Hegyra 36.
Ch. ær. 656.

When the courier entered the city, he carried the packet on the top of a staff, to inform the inhabitants that the governor of Syria had written to the Caliph. The arrival of that courier gave great pleasure to all such as were desirous of peace; they concluded he was ordered to make such a shew of the letter; and supposed it might contain some terms for an accomodation, which might put an end to all misunderstanding between the Caliph and Moawiyah.

The people therefore immediately thronged after him to know the contents of his message. Ali, on his part, was also very desirous of coming to terms with Moawiyah, and especially at a juncture when the flame of revolt was spreading with the greatest violence; but when he opened the letter he was greatly amazed to find it was only a blank paper, not so much as a word being written in it; which he rightly judged to be a token of the utmost defiance

ALI.
Hegyra 36.
Ch. ær. 656.

defiance and contempt, which called for a speedy vengeance.

However, the Caliph had so much the mastery of his passions, as to shew no great change in his countenance; he even discoursed with the courier, and asked him what news in Syria. The messenger answered, that there were sixty thousand men in arms, who only waited for orders to begin their march. He added, that the first appearance of the insurrection was at Damascus, where they had set up Othman's bloody shirt as a standard, over the pulpit in the open mosque.

Ali, unable to contain himself at this relation, answered with great emotion, "Do they require the blood of Othman at my hands? I call God to witness I am not guilty of it, and hope he will assist me."

After so plain an information, a war in Syria was unavoidable. But whilst he was endeavouring to guard against a distant enemy, a party was formed even in Arabia, which was by so much the more formidable, as the famous Aiesha, the Caliph's inveterate enemy, was at the head of it. She was the main spring, and as it were, the soul of that conspiracy against Ali, and at her house the conspirators assembled to debate on such measures as were proper to be taken for securing the success of their plot. And there appeared, either personally or by deputies, the whole house of Ommiyah, who all concurred in the

the design of revenging the death of Othman, who was one of their family.

ALI.
Hegyra 36.
Ch. ær. 656.

As to the Ommiyahs they seemed to have some pretence to punish the Caliph for the death of their kinsman : they sincerely thought that Ali was the perpetrator of it ; and no pains had been spared to confirm them in that belief. But in respect to Aïsha, Tellah, and Zobeir, who headed the conspiracy, their conduct in that juncture, was an effect of the basest treachery.

If we may rely on the testimony of Ebn Athir, an arabian writer, Aïsha and her two associates were the real contrivers of, or at least accomplices in Othman's assassination. They alone deserved to have received the punishment due to so heinous a crime ; but by an uncommon stretch of wickedness they contrived to throw the whole blame on Ali, that they might more surely destroy him. Such was the virtuous Aïsha, so highly boasted of by her countrymen, and so well known in the mussulman history, by the title of the " mother of the faithful " which might surely have given her a dispensation from appearing as an accuser of any of her children, even though they had been signally culpable ; but it was certainly a most infamous piece of treachery first to commit a crime, and then to charge it upon another person, upon her sovereign, and if I may so express myself, upon the whole state, which was thereby exposed

AL I.
Hegyra 36.
Ch. ær. 656.

Different
schemes for a
revolt.

to suffer all the ill consequences of furious and intestine divisions.

Their revolt having been agreed upon, nothing remained but to fix on proper measures for carrying it into execution; to which end conferences were held at the house of Aïesha. That vindictive woman proposed they should forthwith march to Medina. She was for taking away the malady root and branch. Some others were of opinion that they ought to march into Syria, to join the numerous army which Moawiyah had raised in that province.

These different opinions having been fully debated and maturely weighed, it was not thought proper to follow either of them. It was observed that almost all the inhabitants of Medina sided with the Caliph, and to fall on him there, would be attacking him in his strongest part. As to the march into Syria, it was said, that as Moawiyah was strong enough to maintain the possession of his government, they might safely leave to him the defence of that province.

As the party did not come into either of these measures, a third was proposed; namely, to begin their operations of war in those parts where they might have the greatest prospect of success, and forthwith to seize some strong places. Tellah, who was at the meeting, proposed an expedition to Basorah, which he was of opinion they might easily become masters of, he having a good interest in that city.

city. This scheme was approved of, and the confederates were forthwith informed of it by proclamations made in the streets of Mecca, and by a circular letter, couched in the following terms.

AL I.
Hegyra 36.
Ch. ær. 656.

“The mother of the faithful, Tellah, and Zobeir are going in person to Basorah. Whosoever therefore is desirous of defending his religion, and fighting voluntarily to revenge the death of Othman, let him come, and if he has not the necessary conveniences for the journey, they shall be provided for him.”

They assemble their troops, and march towards Basorah.

Their troops having been soon assembled, they prepared for their departure. Aiesha, mounted on a camel, headed the forces in their march from Mecca towards Basorah.

When they arrived at a place called Jowáb, they halted some time to refresh the troops, which step had like to have put an end to their expedition. The dogs of the village having gathered together, came running out, and barked at Aiesha for a considerable time.

A singular event stops them in their march.

This event appeared to her to be so ill an omen, that she immediately asked, with great surprize, what was the name of the place; and having been informed that it was called Jowáb, she, quoting that versicle of the Koran which is often repeated in cases of imminent danger, “My support is from God alone, in him do I trust, and unto him do I turn me.” declared she would not stir a step further, and prepared to dismount from her camel.

Alcorán, chap. 11th.

ALI.
Hegyra 36.
Ch. ær. 656.

The chiefs being greatly alarmed at a resolution which would put an end to the enterprize, earnestly intreated her not to abandon them; but the longer she reflected on that accident, the less she seemed inclined to go forwards. She declared that she had heard the prophet say when he was travelling with his wives, “ I wish I had known it, and they should have lodged within the barking of the dogs of Jowáb;” that Mahomet had also formerly declared to her, that one of his wives should at a certain time be barked at by the dogs of the same village; that she ought to take care of it, for she would then be in most imminent danger.

It was no easy matter to eradicate such a kind of prejudice from the mind of a woman who from her infancy had imbibed enthusiastic and superstitious notions: However the chief officers of the army, who were sensible of the ill consequences that might result from so unlucky an accident, endeavoured to quiet the apprehensions of Aïesha, by suborning some peasants, who, for the lucre of a little money, agreed to assert that it was a mistake to call their village Jowáb, for it had never been known by that name, and they agreed to give it another, which probably was not so ill boding. Upon this they forthwith returned to Aïesha and informed her of the news. They even caused their witnesses to appear before her, who declared on their oath what they had promised to assert. But Aïesha
had

had not yet got over her fears, and she resolved to lye all night at the village, that she might have time to consider what resolution she should come to.

ALI.
Hegyra 36.
Ch. ær. 656.

Tellah and Zobeir, vexed to find that a stop was put to their march on account of such ridiculous difficulties, and knowing of how great importance it was to make the best use of their time (there being great cause to suspect that Ali would speedily march after them) contrived an expedient, which soon removed all obstacles. They previously instructed some horsemen of their army and sent them to a distance from the camp, who returned full gallop, crying out quick, quick, yonder comes Ali and his troops.

This artifice succeeded. Fear of the present danger prevailed over all apprehensions on account of the prediction; they all decamped in the greatest haste, and the superstitious Aïesha, nimbly leaping up on her camel, was soon foremost of the company, and led them on so briskly, that in a short time they arrived in sight of Basorah.

The revoltors
appear before
Basorah.

They did not expect that the city would make any great resistance. Tellah, as has been said, held a correspondence there, and had raised a considerable party of malecontents who had very roughly treated Othman Ebn Hanif, when he came to take possession of the government of that city in the room of him who had been appointed by the last Caliph. Othman was therefore obliged to

ALI.
Hegyra 36.
Ch. ær. 656.

return to Medina; but as there were great divisions amongst the inhabitants, by means of the party that had declared for Ali, he was recalled. On which he returned to Basorah, entered on the execution of his office, and strove to put an end to the sedition. In time, perhaps, he might have prevailed; but by the pernicious cabals of Tellah, a party was always kept up which would by no means agree to an accomodation.

The inhabi-
tants are de-
feated.

When Aiesha appeared with her army before the city, the new governor marched out at the head of his troops to prevent them from investing the place; but as he was inferior in numbers to his enemies, he was defeated at the first onset; and having lost about forty of his men in the skirmish, he was taken prisoner. They treated him in the most outrageous manner. The Arabians had a great veneration for their beards, a greater injury could not (in their opinion) be done them than to cut them off: and Aiesha's party, that they might add a kind of torment to the injury, tore out by the roots, hair by hair, the beard and eyebrows of the unfortunate governor. They kept him prisoner during a short time, after which they set him at liberty, as an example to all such as should dare to make resistance.

Ammâr as-
sembles the
inhabitants
to sound their
intentions.

Whilst Othman was in confinement, Ammâr his deputy undertook the defence of the city, and prepared to face the enemy. But as he well knew that divisions reigned amongst

amongst the inhabitants of Basorah, he was first desirous to sound how they stood affected towards their countrymen who were come in an hostile manner to attack them.

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He therefore called the inhabitants to the mosque to hold a consultation. One of them stood up and spoke in the following terms. "If these people come hither out of fear, they come from a country where a bird may be safe. If they make inquiry for the blood of Othman, we did not kill Othman: Wherefore take my advice, and send them back to the place from whence they came; for surely the cause of their coming hither is different from what they pretend."

That orator would probably have enlarged on the motives which he presumed had engaged Aïesha and her confederates to undertake that expedition; but the people did not give him time. So great a tumult arose that no measures could be resolved on; and thereby it was perceived, that the inhabitants were at great variance with each other.

In the mean time Aïesha and her train drawing nearer the city, some of the most moderate amongst the inhabitants went out to her, to know why she had raised such great disturbances in her own country. Aïesha, with a loud shrill voice, harrangued the deputies and all the rest of the inhabitants present in a long speech; but whether she did not express herself clearly, or whether

A deputation
sent to Aï-
esha.

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passion prevented them from putting a proper construction on what she uttered, they differed in opinion touching her discourse. Some said she had spoken well, the opposite party gave them the lye; and from words they came to blows. But the combat was not very dangerous, for they only threw the gravel and pebbles at each other.

When the dispute was a little over, one of the Arabs approaching Aïesha, spoke to her in a very rational manner touching the step she had taken. “O mother of the faithful,” said he, “the murdering of Othman was a thing of less moment than thy coming out from thy house upon this cursed camel. God hath bestowed on thee a vail and a protection: but thou hast rent the vail, and set the protection at nought. The same persons that now are witnesses of thy quarrelling here, will also be witnesses of thy death. If thou camest to us of thine own accord, return back to thine own house; if thou wast brought hither by force, call for assistance, and thou shalt find Mussulmen enough to conduct thee home with all honour and safety.”

Another of the inhabitants, with design to upbraid the prophet's wife for having, against the modesty of her sex, put herself at the head of an army, came up to Tellah and Zobeir, and told them he perceived they had brought their mother with them, and asked if the officers and soldiers had not also brought

brought their wives to accompany them upon that expedition.

This reproach bore hard on Aïesha and all her retinue; who at the same time were far from being pleased with the first harangue, though they had not even a plausible answer to give either to the one or the other; infomuch that invectives soon ensued, which were followed by blows. The action was bloody, many being killed on each side. The next day it was renewed, but the troops of Aïesha sustained the greatest loss.

It may be truly said, that hitherto the parties had fought without scarce knowing why. Some of the most dispassionate of the inhabitants of Basorah, demanded a suspension of arms till the return of the deputies they were about to send to Medina, to make a proper enquiry about the cause of the present quarrel.

Aïesha and her adherents accepted the proposal of the inhabitants; but as the turbulent disposition of her adherents prevented them from remaining long inactive, they designed to seize Basorah by surprize: and in order to forward the success of their intended enterprize, they proposed to get the person of the governor into their hands.

Othman Ebn Hanif, whom they had so injuriously treated at the first attack of Basorah, was still governor of that city, into which he retired after his enlargement, and which he was now preparing to defend in the best

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Battle between the revoltors and the inhabitants of Basorah.

The revoltors in vain attempt to seize the governor.

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best manner he could. To him they sent a messenger, requesting that he would come to their camp, in order to confer with Aïsha. But it may be reasonably supposed that considering the baseness of their late conduct, he had no inclination to put himself again into their power, by yielding to an invitation which he also concluded to be a fresh instance of their treachery. However it did not appear from the answer he returned, that he entertained the least suspicion of their design, for he alledged as a reason why he declined the conference, the convention that had been stipulated for a suspension of all hostilities on both sides, till the deputies should return.

Tellah and Zobeir, being highly vexed at missing their aim, resolved to make themselves amends by seizing the city itself, which they considered to be an important post that might serve their party as a place of arms.

They take
the city.

Taking advantage of a dark and tempestuous night, they surprized the city, and lodged themselves in the mosque. Othman did prodigies of valour in attempting to dislodge them; but as he had not a sufficient number of troops, he was obliged to retreat. And the enemy, encouraged by success, pursued and pushed him very hard. The governor, who had but an handful of soldiers about him, for a long time defended himself with great bravery; but at last resistance became vain, and he was seized by the enemy.

So soon as he was taken prisoner, word was sent to Aiesha, to know which way she would please to dispose of him. The first sentence she pronounced was death; but at the intercession of one of her attendants, who adjured her in the name of God, and the companions of the apostle, not to kill him, the sentence was changed into forty stripes, and imprisonment.

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So soon as full possession was taken of the new conquered city, Aiesha, together with Tellah and Zobeir, the leaders of the party, made their publick entry therein. They strove to gain the affections of the people, and to prevail on them unanimously to declare against Ali, whom they had devoted to destruction.

We shall now return to Medina, where Ali was endeavouring to fix the inhabitants more firmly in his interest. He looked upon the Medinians to be his firmest friends; for as his election was the work of their hands, he expected they would exert themselves to support it. He made a speech to the people at a general assembly held in the mosque. He loudly and warmly declaimed against the presumptuous designs of the rebels, who refused to acknowledge him as sovereign, and thereby manifestly controverted their right of conferring the crown. He exhorted them not to overlook so great an insult, and assured them that

The Caliph
exhorts the
Medinians to
rise up in his
defence.

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that God would direct and help them in their affairs.

Though Ali was well beloved of the people, though they well knew he was fairly elected, and though he was allowed to be the best orator of the age, yet his harangue was far from having the desired effect. Instead of loud acclamations, and that readiness which he expected his friends would have shewn to take up arms without delay, and which was so necessary in order to prevent the spreading of the revolt; he had the mortification to find an universal silence and backwardness amongst them, the fear of a civil war seeming to have tyed up their tongues, as well as frozen their zeal for his cause.

Ziyád-ebn-Hantelah, a person of eminent rank and distinguished valour, was so moved at the indifference shewn by his countrymen, that he voluntarily stepped up to Ali and said, “ Let whosoever will hold back, we will be forward.”

This step of Ziyád made a strong impression upon the minds of the whole assembly. They were inwardly vexed that they had not shewn the same courage. Insensibly a murmur arose in behalf of the Caliph, and they seemed inclinable to join in his defence; but many of them were prevented by the reports which Aïsha and her party had artfully propagated touching the death of the last Caliph, not that they generally believed him to be guilty of so heinous a crime; but
the

the very imputation of it made them backward to declare in his favour.

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But this impediment was soon removed. Two of the religious anfans, who were doctors of the mussulman law, and held in great esteem on account of the integrity of their lives, stood up in the midst of the assembly, and loudly pronounced that “The * imam Othman, master of the two testimonies, did not die by the master of the two testimonies. †” Meaning that Ali was not guilty of of the death of Othman.

So solemn a decision caused all their scruples to vanish. Abu Kotadad, an anfar of great distinction, drawing his sword and shewing it to the people, said, “The apostle of God, upon whom be peace, girt me with this sword, which I have sheathed a long while; but it is now high time to draw it against these wicked men who are always deceiving the people.”

All distinction of party being now at an end, and the inhabitants of Medina unanimously resolved to march out in defence of the Caliph; Ali, well pleased with the favourable resolutions of the people, was

* Imam, in Arabic, signifies a head or pontiff, and is the same amongst the Mahometans as a bishop or parish priest amongst the Christians. They gave the Caliphs the title of Imams, because they were supreme both in spirituals and temporals.

† The master of the two testimonies, signifies the Caliph, as head of the mussulman religion, which consists in these two fundamental points: “There is but one God. Mahomet is the apostle of God.”

desirous

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The governor
of Cufah re-
fuses to fend
succours to
the Caliph.

desirous of marching after Aïesha and her party, in hopes of preventing the rebels from getting possession of Basorah; to which end he departed from the city at the head of about nine hundred men. But being informed at a place called Arrabdah, that it would be in vain, he halted there, and sent expresses to different parts of his dominions, with orders that they should send him speedy succours. During his stay there he also dispatched Mahomet the son of Abubecre, and Mahomet the son of Giaffer, with instructions to treat with the inhabitants of Cufah, and to obtain from them a timely reinforcement of troops; but their embassy was not attended with success. The governor of Cufah*, who in the beginning of the troubles had sent him word that all was well in those parts, and acquainted him with the particulars of all that concerned him there, perceiving how the face of things was changed, and apprehensive of the success of Aïesha and her associates at Basorah, began to be in suspense, and treated Ali's envoys with great coldness; and though they intreated him with the greatest earnestness, they could not prevail on him to declare for the Caliph.

The deputies finding that intreaties stood them in no stead, reproached him for his ingratitude and injustice: but this only served

* Abu Musa.

to discover his ill-will towards Ali; for he declared with an oath, that the assassination of Othman still hung over his own, as well as their master's head; and they were resolved not to stir in the quarrel, unless compelled by absolute necessity, till they had cleared their hands of Othman's murderers. The envoys being unable to obtain any other answer, set out to join Ali, full of rage and vexation.

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They went to the camp at Arrabdah, expecting to have found the Caliph there; but he had quitted it, and was marched nearer to Basorah, having been joined by a reinforcement which the tribe of Thai had sent him under a chief named Saïd-ebn-Obeid. And shortly after, during his march, he received further succours from the tribe of Ased, which insensibly increased his little army, and inspired him with the most sanguine hopes of success in his designs.

The deputies who returned from Cufah, came up with him at Dulkhar, at the very time when Othman, the governor of Basorah, came to wait upon the Caliph, and give him an account of what passed there. Ali, perceiving upon his visage marks of the cruel treatment he had met with from Aiesha and her attendants, pitied his misfortune, and publickly bestowed high commendations on his fidelity and constancy.

The deputies he had sent to Cufah, then gave him an account of their negotiations.

The

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Hegyra 36.
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The behaviour of Abu Musa touched him to the quick; however this insulting answer did not discourage him; he sent other deputies, who were as unsuccessful as the former; and upon their return, he finally resolved to send his eldest son Hasan thither, together with Ammar-ebn-Yasar, (whom he appointed his colleague) with orders to make a fresh attempt, and to use all possible means for bringing over to his side the governor and inhabitants of that city.

Hasan negotiates with the Cufians for the obtaining of succours.

Abu Musa received Hasan with great marks of respect; but when they came into the mosque to debate the matter, he opposed it with the same vigour as before, and exerted his utmost to prevent the people from complying with Ali's proposals. But things took a sudden turn; for a tumult beginning to arise in the assembly, Zeid-ebn-Saüchan stood up, and produced a letter which he had received from Aiesha, commanding him either to stay at home, or to come to her assistance; together with another to the Cufians to the same effect. Having read them both to the people, he said, "Aiesha was commanded to abide in her house, and we to fight till the sedition should be quelled. Now she hath commanded us to do her part, and hath taken ours upon herself."

It is a text in the Koran.

The freedom with which Zeid had censured the conduct of Aiesha, provoked the opposite party, who began to murmur and

utter

utter invectives, and a warm debate ensued : but Hasan appearing inclined to speak to the people, the tumult by degrees subsided, and silence having been obtained, he arose, and spoke thus : “ Your monarch,” said he, meaning the Caliph, “ requires your assistance, and it is both your duty and interest to grant it him. Can you alledge any just cause for refusing it ? Can any man truly upbraid him with having shewn a covetous inclination, or with having perverted justice ? Will any amongst you say, that he hath intruded himself into the Caliphat, or is unworthy of that dignity ? The rebels, indeed, pretend they have taken up arms to avenge the death of Othman : but be not deceived, O ye men of Cufah ; the avenging Othman is but a pretext, the dethroning Ali is their real design. Ali, who was unanimously chosen at Medina, and to whom Tellah and Zobeir, that now head the rebels, took the oath of allegiance.”

This harangue had a greater effect than all the preceding negotiations. The Cusians were moved at the persecutions the Caliph suffered. Hasan, who was attentive to all that passed at the assembly, plainly saw the temper of the people, and, by his affable and condescending behaviour during his short stay in that city, intirely fixed the inhabitants in his interest. When he took his leave, he told them he was going to his father ; that he would acquaint him with their

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good intentions towards him, and give him hopes they would be speedily carried into execution. The Cufians having expressed a desire of marching forthwith in defence of their sovereign, Hasan declared how greatly he was obliged to them for their readiness, and at his departure told them, that such as thought fit to follow him, would do an essential service to the state, and he should think it an honour to march at their head.

The Cufians
raise troops
for the Caliph.

The promises of the Cufians were soon carried into effect, and about nine thousand of them began their march. Hasan, who was equally surprized and pleased at the success of his negotiation, forthwith dispatched a messenger to the Caliph, to inform him of so happy an event.

This important news filled Ali and his party with joy. The highest encomiums were bestowed on the zeal of the Cufians; and in order to shew his gratitude, the Caliph marched forwards, and met and welcomed them. He harangued the new recruits with his accustomed eloquence; and after having greatly praised their valour, for which they had been distinguished on so many occasions, and particularly at the time they conquered Persia, he addressed them in the following terms, in relation to the present posture of affairs:

“ I have called you hither, (said he) brave Cufians, to be witnesses between us and our brethren of Basorah. It is my intention to
make

make use of gentle means, in hopes of bringing them to their duty without the shedding of mussulman blood. And if any amongst you maintain a correspondence, or have an interest in the place, I intreat that you will labour with me in bringing about an accommodation ; for I here openly declare, I prefer peace to all the advantages that may be gained by arms : since on which side soever the fortune of war declares, the portion of the subject is certain desolation.”

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The loud acclamations uttered by the people on the concluding this harangue, convinced the Caliph that he might rely on their favourable dispositions. Ali therefore shortly began his march to find out the rebels.

On receipt of this news, Aïesha and her party in Basorah began to be in no small perplexity. But when they saw the Caliph appear with his army, and pitch his camp near the walls of the city, they seemed to be in a despairing condition. The rebels having held several conferences in a very tumultuous manner, Tellah and Zobeir resolved to have an interview with Ali, in order to compromise matters upon the best terms they could procure.

Ali, who breathed only peace, readily agreed to confer with them. At the first interview the Caliph spoke to them with great moderation ; however in such terms as manifested their infidelity and perfidiousness ;

Conference
between Ali
and Zobeir.

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in a word, their rebellion, for which he had not given them the least cause.

“Remember,” said he to Zobeir, “what passed between the prophet, you and me, when he asked you, if you did not love his dear son Ali. You answered, Yes; and he replied, Notwithstanding this, a day will come when you shall rise up against him, and be the occasion of great miseries both to him and all the Mussulmen.”

Zobeir resolves to lay down his arms.

Zobeir, being equally moved at the moderation with which the Caliph spoke to him, and the reproach of having been false to that friendship he had sworn even in the presence of Mahomet, answered with a great shew of contrition: “I well remember it; and had I recollected my promise before, I would never have borne arms against you.” Upon this he retired, and resolved that what turn soever affairs should take, he would no more oppose Ali.

But the envenomed Aïesha never ceased till she had brought him back to the former resolutions she had instilled into him: and that she might have no future cause to fear the unsteadiness of that Mussulman, she prevented his having any more interviews with the Caliph. And as Zobeir expressed great uneasiness on account of the oath of allegiance he had taken to Ali at the time of his inauguration, * she bad him expiate his oath,

* Ockley, in his History of the Saracens, vol. II. fol. 42, says, It was the opinion of some that Abdollah, the son of Zobeir, gave his father the hint.

which he performed by *setting a slave at liberty. By means of this expedient, Zobeir again joined the rebels, and bore arms against Ali, at the battle which was fought shortly after.

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All the conferences that had passed were fruitless. In vain did the Caliph, who had reason and justice, as well as a numerous army on his side, take measures to bring about a reconciliation; the turbulent Aïsha would not listen to his terms, and defeated all his measures, insomuch that they were at last forced to have recourse to a decisive action.

The two armies drew up in order of battle, and lay on their arms opposite each other. Aïsha, in order to give vigour and courage to her friends, mounted her great camel, and was carried up and down the battle in a litter made like a cage. So soon as the signal was given, both sides engaged with equal fury and bravery. The battle was very bloody, and for a long time victory seemed doubtful to which party she should favour. But on the death of one of the rebel generals, Ali's troops had a manifest advantage.

Tellah, one of the chief commanders, finding the ardour of his troops greatly abated, used his utmost efforts to encourage

Tellah is killed.

* This was the method used by the Mussulmen to expiate an oath which they were unwilling to keep, or which would prejudice them to observe.

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them. Merwan, who was then with Ali, observed him, and said, "Behold a traytor and murderer of Othman, who, in hopes of bettering his condition, now appears the foremost amongst those that seek to revenge his blood; but I shall stop him in his career." And with these words he let fly an arrow which mortally wounded Tellah in the thigh. He was forthwith carried out of the battle to a house in Basorah, and his wound dressed, but he was soon sensible he had not long to live. A short time before he died, he saw one of Ali's men (who had probably been taken prisoner,) and being informed that he belonged to the emperor of the faithful, "Give me your hand then," said he, "that I may put mine into it; and by this action renew the oath of fidelity which I have already made to Ali." Which words were no sooner out of his mouth than he expired.

When this was told to Ali, he returned thanks, and said, "God would not call him to heaven till he had blotted out the first breach of his word by this last protestation of fidelity."

The death of
Zobeir.

Ali was at the same time informed that Zobeir, another commander of the rebels, had also lost his life. It has been observed that after his interview with the Caliph he had suffered himself to be seduced by Aïsha, and had again taken up arms against Ali; but as the two armies were on the point of engaging, he was seized with some fresh scruples, having been informed that a famous Mussulman, named

named Ammar-ebn-Yasser was in Ali's camp, and recollecting he had formerly heard Mahomet say, that Yasser was so great a lover of equity and justice, that the party he should espouse would be the honest one; the idea so affected him, that he silently withdrew out of the battle, and went towards Mecca. Being come as far as a valley, crossed by a rivulet called Sabaa, he met an arabian detachment commanded by Hanaf-ebn-Kais, who had sided with neither party, and knowing they were ready to come to blows, was encamped there with his men, attending the success of the battle, with an intent to join the conqueror.

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It appears however from the relation of Mirkoud, a persian historian, that Hanaf was much more inclined to the Caliph than to the other party: for seeing Zobeir at a distance, who was coming towards him, and to whose treachery he was no stranger, he asked his men, if there was nobody that would undertake to give him a good account of Zobeir?

Amru-ebn-Giarmouz stepping out undertook the commission, and immediately rode up to Zobeir, who bad him keep his distance; but after a short conversation growing into greater confidence of Zobeir, they both alighted from their horses. Whilst they were conversing on what passed in the Caliph's army, Zobeir cried out, Salat, that is to prayers, (for the hour of prayer was come) and as he prostrated himself to pray, Amru seized the opportunity, and with one blow of his cimeter severed his head from his body.

ALI.

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Ch. ær. 656.Ali troubled
at Zobeir's
death.

That Mussulman instead of carrying the head to his captain, as he was ordered to do, ran instantly to the Caliph's army, at the time victory had declared in favour of Ali. Amru flattered himself that by presenting to the Caliph the head of so considerable an enemy, he should enhance the advantages the Caliph had obtained. But Ali, far from testifying the least satisfaction, could not help shedding tears at the sight. He spoke very harshly to Amru, and even threatened him with hell. And he who had expected an ample recompence, was astonished at such a rate to see the matter take so different a turn, that laying aside all respect he said to the Caliph, "You are the evil genius of the Mussulmen; if one delivers you from your enemies, you immediately threaten him with hell: and if a man kills any of your adherents, he becomes instantly a companion of the devil. And so great was the rage of Amru that without uttering another word he drew his sword, and plunged it in his own breast.

By the death of Tellah and Zobeir, and the utter defeat of the rebels, Ali's victory was compleat. And he had no longer reason to fear any opposition from enemies in the heart of his dominions; Aïsha herself was made prisoner; vain had she attempted to escape amongst the runaways; * her camel having been

* So long as Aïsha's camel stood on his legs the hottest of the battle was about him. Tabû says that three score and
ten

been hamstrung in the heat of the action, she was obliged to lye upon the field till the battle was over, and there the Caliph had an interview with her.

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The conference began with mutual reproaches. However, Ali in the end treated her with great civility and moderation, and dismissed her to Medina with a very good equipage commanded by his two sons. He required her to remain in her house, not to intermeddle any more with state affairs, and particularly not to join for the future in any faction, which would spare her the shame of reflecting upon herself for having been a second time the authoress of such disturbances as she had already occasioned, to the great detriment of her country.

Conference
between Ali
and Aïsha.

After the departure of Aïsha, Ali having given orders for collecting all the booty taken from the enemy, took a resolution to dispose of it in such a manner as was likely to gain the love of all the army; for he directed that a * considerable part of it should be divided amongst the representatives of † such of his soldiers as had been killed in the battle. And having constituted Abdallah-ebn-Abbas governor of Basorah, in a short time he departed from that city.

ten men's hands were cut off that held his bridle. And Aïsha's litter was stuck so full of arrows and javelins, that it looked like a porcupine. Ockley's Life of Ali, fol. 46.

* Ockley says all the booty. Ibid.

† They did not exceed one thousand. Ibid.

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Ch. ær. 656.Ali fixes his
residence at
Cufah.Ali solicits
Moawiyah to
acknowledge
him for Ca-
liph.Amru sides
with Moawi-
yah.

The Caliph went to Cufah, where he fixed the seat of his empire. Meaning by that honourable mark of distinction to testify his gratitude for the services done him by the inhabitants of that city, to whose assistance and valour, he confessed, he was indebted for the victory he had just obtained.

This great success having rendered Ali exceeding powerful, he seemed to be no longer apprehensive of any molestation from Moawiyah; he was unwilling at that time to attack the governor of Syria with open force, and overlooking the indecent treatment he had received from that Mussulman, on account of a letter he had formerly sent him, he resolved to write to him a second time in hopes of prevailing with him to submit to his authority.

Moawiyah for a time declined to send any satisfactory answer. He was unwilling to take the least step without previously consulting Amru-ebn-al-As, that famous conqueror of Egypt, who having been appointed governor of that province by Omar, had been deprived of, and afterwards restored to it by Othman, and had been lately dismissed from that post by Ali. Moawiyah did not fail entering into a strict league with so considerable a malecontent, and they in concert used their utmost efforts to protract the disorders, that they might by degrees deprive the Caliph of the hearts of the people. Upon receipt, therefore of Ali's letter, Moawiyah communi-
cated

cated the contents to Amru, and desired he would inform him of his sentiments upon the matter. And he at the same time assured him, that he was still bent on revenging the death of the Caliph Othman, that all Syria entertained the same design, and that he would do what in him lay to spur them on.

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Hegyra 36.
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Amru was in Palestine when he received Moawiyah's letter: It gave him the most sensible pleasure to find that governor still persisting in his resolutions to oppose Ali. He returned for answer that he soon proposed to second him, and heartily join in taking vengeance for the Caliph's death.

He no longer bore in mind that Othman had formerly omitted no means of discrediting him, and that so soon as he was elected Caliph, he had deprived him of the government of Egypt, to which he had restored him only on account of the then exigency of affairs, and of the great credit he was in amongst the Egyptians. When Ali ascended the throne, he forthwith again dismissed him from that government, which step induced Amru to declare against him, and to join with Moawiyah in that fatal union which filled the mussulman empire with intestine divisions, and in the end deprived the Caliph of his crown and life.

The connections between Moawiyah and Amru, were greatly strengthened by the victory Ail had just obtained. They foresaw that
if

ALI.
Hegyra 36.
Ch. ær. 656.

if they remained divided, the power he had gained by such an advantage would enable him easily to crush them both. But that by uniting their strength, the enterprize would be attended with much greater difficulties; and it might even be presumed, that two chieftains equally renowned for their conquests, and skill in politics, might be able to counterbalance the Caliph's authority, and in time effectually cause his destruction.

Moawiyah
brings over
the Syrians to
his party.

During the time Moawiyah expected the arrival of Amru, he used all possible means to incense the Syrians against Ali. He represented him as the assassin of Othman, whose death he was concerned to avenge, not only as he was a descendant from Ommiyah, as well as the Caliph, but also out of gratitude for the signal service he had done him in bestowing on him the government of Syria, of which the new Caliph was bent to deprive him.

It has appeared that Moawiyah had already raised a considerable body of troops more than sufficient to have faced the Caliph, at the time of the first disturbances in Medina: but Ali's forces were so much augmented since his late victory, that it was unsafe to march out against him, without having first taken the utmost precautions. Besides, Moawiyah was revolving in his mind an important scheme which he could not carry into execution without a body of troops sufficient to support his ambitious designs.

For

For this cause he used his utmost efforts to gain the whole hearts of the people ; and without making the least discovery of those motives which were the main springs of his conduct, he pretended that his only view was to revenge the death of Othman. The populace who had testified their affection to that Caliph at the time his bloody garments were displayed in public, gave fresh proofs of their regard for him when Moawiyah harangued them on the same subject in the chief mosque of Damascus.

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He loudly accused Ali of having sacrificed Othman to his ambitious views of obtaining the throne. He asserted that the election of the new Caliph had not been confirmed by the voices of the people ; that he had committed outrages on several of the Mussulmen, to force them to pay him homage ; that Tellah and Zobeir having protested against his election, he had pursued them sword in hand, and having obtained a victory over those noble defenders of the blood of Othman, and the liberties of their country, he had presumed to ill treat the widow of the prophet ; that indeed he had not taken away the life of the mother of the faithful, but that his pretended moderation was owing to his apprehensions of stirring up the whole nation against him : and in a word, that the triumphant Caliph was preparing to march into Syria in order to deprive him of his government.

This

A. L. I.

Hegyra 36.
Ch. ær. 656.

This speech, which he uttered with great vehemence, made an impresson on the minds of his auditors, and a murmuring was heard in the assembly which seemed to foretel the concurrence of the people. He seized the lucky moment, and still the more to move them cried out, “Syrians, will you forsake me in so just a cause? if I avenge the death of Othman by shedding every drop of my blood (if need so require,) shall not I revenge the death of your sovereign, who was your benefactor, your father, &c.”

Amru arrives at Damascus.

This harrangue was broke off by the arrival of Amru, who suddenly marched into Damascus at the head of a body of troops which he brought to join Moawiyah. It is asserted that this unexpected arrival had been artfully concerted by the two captains, with a view that the people, already deeply affected by Moawiyah’s speech, might by their acclamations shew their approbation of the scene that was about to pass in their presence.

So soon as Moawiyah was informed of Amru’s arrival, he descended from the pulpit to go and meet him, and was followed by the whole assembly. On his way he told such as were about him that Amru’s arrival was miraculous; and that he could not account for his having been so expeditious: in this manner he advanced to the principal square, opposite the mosque, where he found Amru.

The

The people were all in amaze to see him fall prostrate at Moawiyah's feet; but how great was their astonishment when they heard Amru acknowledge him for * Caliph, and take the oath of allegiance to him. However the spectators were too much warmed with what had already passed, not to follow this example. In short, they proclaimed him with a kind of frenzy, and the whole city of Damascus was filled with tumultuous acclamations in behalf of the new Caliph. The news of this extraordinary inauguration soon reached all the other cities of Syria, and each of them envied the good fortune of Damascus, which, by this event, would become the capital of the mussulman empire.

A L I.

Hegyra 36.
Ch. ær. 656.Moawiyah is
acknowledg-
ed Caliph.

Ali was not long a stranger to these extraordinary emotions; but he must have been sensibly touched at the insulting manner in which Moawiyah communicated the transaction to him. That governor kept the Caliph's courier at Damascus till the time of the revolution, and when it had happened, he sent for the courier, and delivered to him the packet, which informed his master of the fatal blow just given to his authority.

He informs
Ali of that
event.

This resolution was by so much the more formidable, as Moawiyah had gained the greatest reputation among those he governed: besides, Syria was a very extensive province,

* Abu'l Pharagius says that they did not swear to him by the title of Caliph, but only of Emir.

and

ALI.
Hegyra. 36.
Ch. ær. 656.

and capable of receiving assistance from foreigners, by means of its sea ports on the Mediterranean.

Ali marches
against the re-
bels.

Ali, without delay, strove to reduce the rebels to a just sense of their duty by using gentle means; he promised them a general pardon, and an act of oblivion, but all in vain. At length, negociations proving ineffectual, he found himself under a necessity of taking contrary measures, and of using force, to obtain that which moderation could not effect. He therefore departed from Cufah at the head of ninety thousand men, and marched towards Syria.

On his arrival upon the frontiers of that province, he halted some time to refresh his troops, greatly fatigued by their march. And there, according to the relation of arabian historians, an extraordinary event happened, which greatly augmented the love and respect they bore to the Caliph.

He discovers
a well which
furnishes his
troops with
water.

In the place where Ali encamped, water failed him, and he sent into the neighbourhood to inquire out a person, who might shew them a well or cistern capable of supplying his army. They brought before him an old hermit, whose cell was not far from the camp; and the Caliph having interrogated him, he answered that he knew of no more than one cistern, which might contain about two or three buckets of water; but he at the same time gave them to understand, that there were means of finding greater plenty.

Whereupon

Whereupon the Caliph replied, that he knew the ancient patriarchs had digged wells thereabouts; but the difficulty was to find them. ALI.
Hegyra 36.
Ch. ær. 656.

The hermit said he had been informed by some ancient men, that there was a well; but that the mouth of it was closed by a stone of an enormous size; that no man knew where it lay; and the tradition of the country was, that no person could find and open it, but a prophet, or one sent by a prophet.

Ali forthwith caused his men to dig in a spot which he pointed out to them; and not far from the surface they found the huge stone mentioned by the hermit, which the Caliph removed with the greatest ease imaginable.

The hermit surprized at the sight, fell at Ali's feet, acknowledged him to be a prophet, and by way of confirming the eminent title he had bestowed on him, ran to his cell, whence he brought an old worn out parchment; which he said was written by the hand of Simeon ben Safah, otherwise called Simon, the son of Cephas, one of the apostles of Jesus Christ, wherein there was an account given of the coming of the last prophet, and the miraculous discovery of the well, and taking away the stone, by his lawful successor. The credulous Mussulmen looked upon the parchment as an authentic evidence which it would be criminal to dispute, and joined with Ali

ALI.
Hegyra 37.
Ch. ær. 657.

in returning thanks to heaven for so wonderful an event.

After Ali had given his troops some time for refreshment, and taken water sufficient for their use, he continued his march towards Seffein; where he knew the enemy's army was posted*. The proximity of the two armies did not occasion any memorable action during the space of a year; but after several fruitless conferences in order to an accomodation between the parties, many skirmishes happened between small bodies of troops on each side, which were from time to time sent out to scour the country; it seeming as if the two chiefs were afraid of hazarding a general engagement.

Skirmishes
between the
two armies.

However, in a short time, as many men were killed in the † several skirmishes, as if a pitched battle had been fought. Ali lost ‡ five thousand men, the most illustrious of whom was Ammar-ebn-Yassar, Ali's general of the horse. He had been present with Mahomet in several battles, at which he had done him signal service, and had acquired a great reputation amongst the Mussulmen: he was about ninety years of age when he was

* That army consisted of eighty thousand men. Ockley's hist. of the Saracens, vol. II. p. 50.

† It is reported that in the space of one hundred and ten days there were no less than ninety skirmishes between them. Ibid.

‡ Ockley says, twenty five thousand; and though he produces no authority for the same, yet, it is highly probable, from the nature of things, that his observation is right. Ibid.

killed,

killed, and his death was greatly lamented by them all.

ALI.

Hegyra 37.
Ch. ær. 657.

Upon the death of Ammar, Ali with twelve thousand chosen men, so fiercely attacked Moawiyah's army, that he threw them into the utmost confusion. However, the Caliph, with a view to spare the blood of his soldiers, challenged Moawiyah to a single combat, and offered that the conqueror should enjoy the whole: but the governor of Syria declined the combat, spight of the remonstrances of Amru, who declared he thought the proposal very fair, and that he could not avoid accepting it. But Moawiyah shewed himself to be of a different opinion, for he said that Ali never fought hand to hand but he killed his adversary, and he had no inclination to undergo the same fate. But Amru still representing to him that his reputation would be blasted by such a refusal, Moawiyah in a rage at being so hard driven, put an end to the discourse, and told Amru, he wanted him out of the way that he might afterwards enjoy the government himself.

Moawiyah
refuses to fight
with Ali in
single com-
bat.

Moawiyah, not chusing to engage personally at the head of his troops, kept himself out of the reach of danger during the several skirmishes that passed between the two armies after Ali's arrival. In these combats Moawiyah sustained great loss; which, according to the arabian historians, amounted to forty five thousand men.

ALI.

Hegyra 37.
Ch. ær. 657.

Ali being encouraged by the daily advantages he gained, was in hopes of getting a compleat victory, whether the enemy should resolve on fighting or retreating: but Moawiyah having called a council to consider what measures were proper to be taken in their present unhappy situation, they bethought themselves of a stratagem likely to raise divisions amongst Ali's troops, and free themselves from the difficulty.

Stratagem
used by Mo-
awiyah to a-
muse the Ca-
liph's troops.

The expedient was to fix books of the Koran on the points of their lances, and cry out, "This is the book which ought to decide all our differences; and which prohibits the shedding mussulman blood without cause, as is now done." Moawiyah greatly relying on the success of this artifice, put it to the proof during an action in which his troops were very hard pressed, and on the point of being utterly routed. He, at a proper opportunity, caused the detachment, who bore the pikes I have mentioned, to advance; and so soon as the Irakians, in whom the chief strength of Ali's army consisted, saw this, they gave over fighting, and required that they might retreat. Ali did all in his power to re-animate his soldiers; he represented to them that it was only an artifice of Moawiyah and Amru (who he said had no relation to religion or the Koran) and suggested to them by despair; but spight of his remonstrances they threw down their arms, and threatened not only to desert their general, but to deli-
ver

ver him up into the hands of the enemy, if he did not cause a retreat to be forthwith founded. ALI.
Hegyra 37.
Ch. ær. 657.

Thus, by the tumultuous conduct of the bigotted Irakians, was Ali forced to retreat, at the very instant he was on the point of easily gaining a compleat victory.

So soon as the battle was at an end, a negotiation was set on foot between the two armies, to determine the difference in an amicable manner, since it was not thought proper to decide the matter by the sword. It was proposed, that according to the meaning of the Koran, and the tradition of the apostle, the whole should be referred to the arbitration of two men, the one to be chosen by Ali, the other by Moawiyah. Proposal to
determine
differences by
the opinion of
arbitrators.

This measure having been resolved on, without Ali's knowledge or consent, they asked him if he approved of the expedient. Ali coldly answered, "He that is not at liberty cannot give his advice; you may manage this affair in such manner as you think fit." It plainly appearing by the Caliph's answer, that he was in no wise satisfied with the method proposed, they who had begun the negotiation, took every step in their power to terminate it; and of their own accord they nominated as arbitrator for Ali, Abu Musa-al Ashari, an honest well meaning man, but exceeding simple.

Ali had more reasons than one to disapprove of him, for Abu Musa had formerly

ALI.
Hegyra 37.
Ch. ær. 657.

suffered himself to be drawn aside, and had forsaken the Caliph's interest. He mentioned his dislike of the man to the chiefs of the Irakians, who had undertaken the management of the affair, and desired they would dismiss Abu Musa, and appoint Abdollah-ebn-Abbas in his stead: but he was answered that he was his cousin german, and they would have none but such as should deal impartially between him and Moawiyah. He then nominated Alashtar, but they were resolved he should accept of Abu Musa.

On the part of Moawiyah was named as arbitrator, the famous Amru-ebn-al-As, deservedly reputed the most sensible man of the age. The two referees took a security, signed by Ali and Moawiyah, and both the armies, for themselves and their families, that all should contribute to their assistance to ratify and confirm what they should agree upon.

So soon as the security was signed, a treaty was drawn up, the title of which caused much altercation. The secretary had begun it with these words. "Ali, chief and commander general of the Mussulmen, agrees to a peace with Moawiyah upon the following terms." Moawiyah having read the title, refused to sign the treaty, and said, "I should be a very wicked man indeed, should I make war on him, whom I acknowledge to be chief and commander general of all
to

the faithful." Amru-ebn-al-As also disputed that title, and said it ought to be blotted out. And on the other side, Ali's adherents counselled him by no means to give it up.

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Hegyra 37.
Ch. ær. 657.

Ali knew not at first what resolution to take in the affair, but he soon resolved to forego the title for the sake of peace, and he gave his reasons for such a resolution, in a conference he held on that subject with Hanaf-ebn-Kais.

"I remember, said he, that when I was formerly secretary to my father in law Mahomet, I drew up articles of peace between him and Sohail, who had revolted against him, in which I had intitled Mahomet the apostle and messenger of God. Sohail, seeing the title, refused to sign the treaty, saying, if I had acknowledged your father in law to be the apostle and messenger of God, I should have had no peace to sign, for I would never have made war against him. I acquainted Mahomet with this difficulty, who answered me, "Blot out the title forthwith; it in no wise depends upon this treaty; time will manifest the truth of it; and remember that a day will come, when you will find yourself in the same case." Ali therefore observing to Hanaf that he should advance the public tranquillity by foregoing the title on that occasion, declared that he thought himself under an obligation of complying; and more especially as he was countenanced

ALI. by so venerable an example as that of his
 Hegyra. 37. father-in-law.
 Ch.ær. 657.

So soon as the difficulty was removed, the treaty was signed; and in a short time Ali retired to Cufah, and Moawiyah to Damascus, leaving each of them their army under the command of one of their generals, and as to things concerning religion they each appointed an Imam.

The manner
 in which the
 two arbitra-
 tors act on
 that occasion.

The authority given to the arbitrators having specified the * place of meeting to hold their conferences, they arrived there some time after the departure of Ali and Moawiyah. Amru, who well knew the genius of his partner, treated him with the utmost civility and respect, and at last had so far insinuated himself into, and gained so great credit with Abu Mufa, as to persuade him, that it would be utterly impracticable ever to bring matters to an accommodation without deposing both the competitors, and leaving the choice of a third to the people.

This important article once fixed, they returned each to his camp, and on the day appointed for publishing their award, the troops of Ali and Moawiyah advanced near each other, and a tribunal was raised between the two armies, from which each of the arbitrators was publicly to pronounce his award.

* Dumat al Jondel, a place lying between Mecca, Cufah and Syria. Ockley, vol. II. page 56.

A L I.

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Ch. ær. 657.

There was a kind of polite contention between them, touching which of the two should speak first. Abu Musa would have yielded the honour to Amru; but he had his reasons for declining it, and seemed so determined to give the other the preference, that at last he was persuaded to accept it. Abu Musa therefore first ascended the tribunal, and with a loud voice uttered these words: "I depose Ali and Moawiyah from the Caliphate, to which they both lay claim, in like manner as I take this ring from my finger:" and having made this declaration he immediately came down.

Upon this Amru went up, and said "You have heard how Abu Musa has on his part deposed Ali; I, on my own part, depose him also; and I give the Caliphate to Moawiyah, and invest him therewith, in like manner as I put this ring upon my finger: and this I do with the greater reason and justice, as he is Othman's heir and avenger, and the worthiest of all men to succeed him."

The friends of Ali, amazed at this extraordinary publication of the referees, complained grievously of the conduct of Abu Musa, who, by way of exculpating himself, accused Amru of not having performed the agreements made between them. From complaints they came to ill language, and Abu Musa, ashamed of his conduct, and justly fearing Ali's displeasure, besides not thinking himself

ALI.
Hegyra 37.
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himself safe in the army, fled to Mecca : and the friends of Moawiyah, sensible how advantageous this determination was to them, resolved to support this election of their chief, with all their might.

Rise of the
schism be-
tween the
Mussulmen.

At this time began that so famous schism amongst the Mahometans when the two parties not only cursed one another, but carried matters so far as to come to a mutual solemn excommunication, which was always pronounced when they harangued the people in their mosques, and which was practised a long time by the descendants of Ali and Ommiyah, of which last house were Othman and Moawiyah.

The Kare-
jites quit Ali's
party.

Whilst these things were transacting in Syria, with a view (as was pretended) of settling the tranquillity of the mussulman state, Ali, to his great grief, found himself deserted by a sect, which till that time had appeared firmly attached to his interest. These sectaries were called Karejites, and were a kind of thorough enthusiasts, who acknowledged no authority but such as might best promote their interest.

After Ali had retired to Cusah, some of the Karejites came to him ; they reproached him for having referred that to the judgment of men, which ought to be decided by God alone : that instead of observing the treaty he had imprudently entered into, he ought to pursue his enemies, who were also the enemies of God, without giving quarter.

Ali

Ali answered, that having plighted his faith, he thought himself obliged to keep it; and that in so doing he obeyed what the law of God prescribed. But the Irakians replied, that there was no other judge or arbitrator between him and Moawiyah but God alone, that what he had done was a sin, and that he ought to repent of it.

ALI.

Hegyra 37.
Ch. ær. 657.

Ali remonstrated to them with great warmth, that if it was a sin, it lay at their own door, who had shewn so great inconstancy and stubbornness. He bid them remember that when Moawiyah caused the Alcoran to be carried at the head of his army, he told them it was a meer artifice of the enemy, but that nevertheless they had ceased fighting without his orders; and that in short it was highly injurious in them to urge him to break a treaty which they themselves had forced him to sign, and which he could not contravene without being guilty of perjury.

The rebels, not in the least satisfied with these reasons, urged what they had further to say by way of reply, and the conference ending in a quarrel, they openly revolted from Ali, and chose for their captain Abdollah-ebn-Waheb, who appointed Naharwan (a town between Bagdat and Waset, four miles east of the river Tigris,) for the place of their rendezvous. Thither came all such as were discontented with Ali, of which there was a great number from Cufah, Basorah, and other parts of Arabia.

Ali's

ALI.

Hegyra 37.
Ch. ær. 657.They preach
up a new
doctrine.

Ali's thoughts were at first so totally taken up with Moawiyah, whom he considered as much the more formidable enemy, that he took little notice of the new formed party: but hearing that they were twenty five thousand men strong, and had by dint of the sword propagated doctrines which were absolutely contrary to the laws of Mahomet, he resolved to exterminate the sect.

Hegyra 38.
Ch. ær. 658.

However, he first endeavoured to gain them by gentleness, and to bring them back to their duty by good advice; but these means proving ineffectual, he put himself at the head of a numerous body of forces, and marched out against them, and encamped within sight of the rebels tents.

Ali disperses
the Karejites.

Before he began the battle, he made use of this expedient, in hopes of bringing them to obedience: he caused a standard to be planted at the head of his camp, with a writing fixed to the flag-staff, importing, that all such as should come under it should have good quarter; and if any of them would return to Cufah, they should there find a sanctuary.

He caused the same thing to be proclaimed by sound of trumpet, and had the pleasure to find his stratagem successful. The rebel troops soon dispersed themselves; and of their numerous army only four thousand men remained together: however, Abdollah was resolved with this small number to signalize his bravery by a desperate attempt. He attacked Ali's armies, notwithstanding the great inequality

inequality of numbers: but his rashness was duly punished, for he and all his men were cut in pieces, except nine only, which was the very number Ali lost in the battle.

ALI.

Hegyra 38.
Ch. ær. 658.

This victory having re-united the Arabians under the government of Ali, he thought his authority was well established, and would have marched against Moawiyah immediately after he had won the battle, in hopes that the news of his great success might have staggered Moawiyah's party, and smoothed the way to his gaining equal advantages in Syria. But his chief officers represented to him, that it would be proper to give the troops some time for refreshing themselves, and making due preparations for a war, which threatened to be of long continuance. Ali followed their advice, and formed his camp at Nakilah, near Cufah. There his troops had time to recover their fatigue, and there his army was considerably strengthened by new recruits, whom he caused to be well instructed in discipline, in order to fit them for the trade of war.

Ali prepares
to march out
against Moa-
wiyah.

Whilst the Caliph was making ready his forces to act against Moawiyah, that formidable rival was using all possible measures to enable him to stand his ground against Ali, and to deprive him of the obedience of such of his subjects as still remained firm in his interest: in particular he strove to raise disturbances in Egypt, which he brought about in a very artful manner.

Egypt

ALI.

Hegyra 38.
Ch. ær. 658.

Egypt still continued faithful to Ali. Some considerable emotions had indeed happened in that province at the beginning of his reign: the Egyptians had insisted that he ought to punish the assassins of Othman; and he, unwilling to engage in so nice an affair, having shewn a great backwardness in complying with their request, they refused to acknowledge Saad-ebn-Kais, whom he had appointed governor over them, in the room of Amru.

Saad gains possession of his government in Egypt.

Their first warmth being a little abated, Saad again returned to Egypt, and gained possession of his government. That Mussulman was a man of consummate prudence and known fidelity, and behaved in his post with so much caution and skill, that though there was in the province a numerous party of men totally devoted to Moawiyah, he not only found means to maintain Ali's authority without displeasing his opponents, but also gained the good will of the greatest part of them.

He is suspected by Ali, through the artifice of Moawiyah.

The artful Moawiyah foreseeing that all his practices in that country would be fruitless, whilst it should be under the conduct of such a governor, resolved within himself to get Saad recalled. For which purpose he caused a report to be spread over all Syria, that he was very well satisfied in respect to Egypt, which he knew would declare for him in due time; that this governor was his friend and acted in concert with him, and therefore had

had not attacked the party of the Othmanians; that he could the more rely on him, as he acted with uncommon prudence; and that they might boldly trust him with their most important secrets, without fear of his disclosing them.

ALI.
Hegyra 38.
Ch. ær. 658.

This report being first spread with a pretended caution and reserve, was soon propagated in all parts. Moawiyah, who had his spies and concealed friends even in Ali's court, found means to hint suspicions of that governor's misconduct, which they attempted to make appear from his moderate behaviour to Ali's enemies; in a word they omitted nothing capable of giving the Caliph an ill impression of him.

The post which Saad then possessed was too lucrative not to rouse the desires of the greedy courtiers, many of whom industriously strove to forward the belief of this invidious accusation, with a view to ruin the governor, and enjoy his spoils. By this artifice was Ali deceived; they represented Saad to him as a false traytor. It was with great difficulty he could believe the accusation true; but they whose interest it was that he should believe it, were so indefatigable in their applications and remonstrances, that at last he recalled Saad from his government, and appointed Mahomet, the son of Abubeker, (the first Caliph) in his stead.

Saad is recalled and his government given to Mahomet.

The conduct of this new governor produced just such an effect as Moawiyah hoped for

ALI.
Hegyra 38.
Ch. ær. 658.

for from the change. Mahomet thought he should recommend himself to Ali by treating all his enemies, and above all those of the faction of Othman, with the utmost rigour. This imprudent zeal exasperated the Egyptians against the new governor; even those who were Ali's fastest friends could not help condemning the rigour with which he treated the opposite party. They foresaw with great grief that such a procedure would intirely destroy the Caliph's interest; and in a very short time the whole province was divided and at war with each other, and their dissentions and disorders were carried to the greatest height.

Malec Shutur, appointed his successor, is poisoned.

Ali, being speedily informed how highly prejudicial it would be to his interest in Egypt, should Mahomet be any longer continued governor of that province, appointed Malec Shutur (sometimes called Ushtur Malec) to succeed him, and restore his authority there. It is highly probable that Malec was a man of no inconsiderable abilities, and it seems that Moawiyah was afraid his arrival in Egypt might ruin his project, for so soon as he had notice of the sending this new governor, he dealt with a countryman that lived upon the confines of Arabia and Egypt, at whose house Malec Shutur was to lodge, to give him poison in the entertainment he had prepared for him. The peasant, who was a friend to Moawiyah, punctually executed his orders,
and

and gave him poisoned honey to sup, of which he died in the house.

ALI.
Hegyra 38.
Ch. ær. 658.

Moawiyah having soon received the news, which he expected with the greatest impatience, dispatched in all haste Amru-ebn-al-As, with six thousand horse, to take possession of the government of Egypt in his name. That general marched with such expedition, that in a few days he reached the capital city; where he joined Ben Scharig, chief of Othman's party, who waited only for a favourable opportunity to retaliate on the governor the injuries he had done to the Egyptians. The two chiefs joined their forces, and marched out in quest of the enemy.

Amru seizes
Egypt for
Moawiyah.

Mahomet, who retained the title and authority of governor for Ali, till another was sent to succeed him, had collected as many troops as he could, in hopes of bridling the rebels, but those troops were not numerous enough to enable him to withstand such considerable succours as were brought to them by Amru and Scharig: insomuch that having marched up to those two generals, to give them battle, ere they advanced farther into the country, he was beaten; and, what added to his misfortune, he fell alive into his enemys hands, who quickly slew him, and inclosing his dead body in the carcass of an embowelled ass, (to shew their detestation of him for the cruelties he had inflicted on them) they burned it to ashes.

Mahomet is
killed.

ALI.
 Hegyra 38.
 Ch. ær. 658.

The revolution of affairs caused by the loss of this battle, filled Ali with grief. He sent for Abdallah ebn Abbas, from Basorah, of which city he was governor, that he might enjoy the pleasure of his conversation, and that they might together take such measures as were most proper in the melancholy situation of his affairs.

It is a little amazing that Ali did not resolve to make use of his numerous army, which was encamped at Nakilah, and had fully recovered their fatigue, and forthwith to march out against an active enemy, who lost not a moment, and who being already master of Egypt, was on the point of enlarging his conquests: but Ali wasted his time in useless conferences and consultations. Moawiyah, who was watchful to take advantage of all opportunities, was no sooner informed of Abdallah's departure from Basorah, than he sent out two thousand horse, under the command of Hadrami, who advanced up to the city, and took it by surprize. Abdallah had constituted Ziyad his lieutenant in that place: and the deputy not having troops sufficient to withstand Hadrami, abandoned the town on the arrival of the enemy, and informed Ali how very necessary it was to send him speedy succours, that he might at least be able to keep the field.

Hadrami
 takes Basorah
 by surprize.

The Caliph without delay caused a considerable body of troops to march to his assistance

tance which arrived so opportunely that ALI.
 Ziyad fought out Hadrami, engaged him near Hegyra 28,
 Baforah, and totally routed the enemy, whose Ch. ær. 658:
 general was killed in the action. Upon this He is de-
 the city surrendered to Ali's government, feated, and
 who, being a little encouraged by this advan- the city re-
 tage, forthwith sent away Abdallah to re- taken.
 assume the government, who returned to the
 city, and used his best means to put it in such
 a posture, as to prevent any future sur-
 prize.

This event happened in the close of the Hegyra 39.
 38th year of the Hegyra. The next year Ch. ær. 659:
 passed without any considerable adventures;
 for the Syrians being weary of the war, un-
 dertook nothing against the Arabians, who
 were unable to do more than stand upon the
 defensive.

After a short cessation, in the beginning of Hegyra 40.
 the 40th year of the Hegyra, Moawiyah Ch. ær. 660.
 signalized himself by new exploits. The Moawiyah
 private correspondence he had kept in the becomes
 province of Hejaz, induced him to form a master of Hez-
 resolution of sending a body of troops to that jaz.
 province, in order to seize upon its two prin-
 cipal towns, and by that means to open him-
 self a way into Yemen, or Arabia Fælix.

The conquest of Hejaz by the Syrians was
 so rapid, that it had rather the appearance of
 a journey than a military expedition. The
 Arabians, who had full time to have put their
 towns in a proper posture of defence, and pre-
 pare an army, had neither taken care of the

ALI.
Hegyra 40.
Ch. ar. 660.

one, nor provided the other ; infomuch that on the first approach of the Syrians, the governors of the chief places abandoned their posts. Thus the generals of Moawiyah, without the least difficulty, became masters of the chief towns in that province, and in particular of Mecca and Medina, whose inhabitants were forced to take the oath of allegiance to Moawiyah.

His troops ravage Yemen.

The Syrian troops having made preparations to invade the province of Yemen, Abidallah, governor of that country, marched out against them with all the forces he could raise, in hopes of beating them on the frontiers, and preventing them from entering the province ; but the success did not answer his expectations : his troops were broke, and totally routed ; and he was forced to save himself by flight. Having, in his confusion, left behind him two of his sons, who were very young, they fell into the hands of the Syrians, who put them both to a very cruel death.

Arabian historians relate, that Ali was so greatly affected with the unhappy fate of those two children, that he cursed the author of so great an outrage, and begged of God to deprive him of sense and reason. And they add, that Arthah (for so the general of Moawiyah, who had been guilty of that cruelty, was called) in a few years actually became a madman, and at last died in a fit of rage and despair.

At

At the time the Syrians were in Yemen, ALI. Hegyra 40. Ch. ær. 660. Ali sent thither four thousand horse, under the conduct of a captain, named Jariah, to pursue Arthah. But this succour was of no use to the inhabitants of the country; for so soon as the enemy had entered it, they plundered it from one end to the other with the utmost expedition, and retired with great precipitation; insomuch that they were returned to their own country by the time Jariah reached Yemen.

Amidst these misfortunes a new calamity befel Ali, which the more sensibly afflicted him, as it was caused by his own brother. Okail goes over to Moawiyah. Okail, for that was the Mussulman's name, was so base to abandon Ali, and join Moawiyah, who received him with open arms, and assigned him a great revenue. Okail alleged no other reason for his desertion, but that his brother had not maintained him suitably to his rank.

At this very time a conspiracy was formed with intent to destroy the two competitors for the Caliphate and Amru. The project was contrived by three of the Karegites, (men most zealous for the advancement of their sect) who being met together at Mecca, fell into discourse on the battle of Naharwan, in which four thousand of their brethren lost their lives.

After having exalted the merit, and bewailed the loss, of those who were killed in that battle, they debated amongst themselves A conspiracy to kill Ali, Moawiyah, and Amru.

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Hegyra 40.
Ch. ar. 660.

what had occasioned those intestine divisions which had so long rent the state; and having unanimously agreed that Ali, Moawiyah, and Amru were the sole authors of them, they resolved to dispatch them all, being firmly persuaded that on the death of those three persons, whom they called erroneous Imams, their country would be restored to its usual tranquillity.

These Karegites were called Abdalrahman-ebn-Melgem, Barak-ebn-Abdallah, and Amru-ebn-Beker. And after having held several conferences, the first of them undertook to go to Cufah, and give a good account of Ali; the second engaged to do the same in regard to Moawiyah; and the third promised to make away with Amru.

These three men having thus resolved to execute their design, pitched upon the time of the solemn assembly of the Mussulmen at Mecca, when they might be sure the chiefs would not be from home, and would be more slenderly accompanied than usual. The conspirators, with a view to secure the success of the enterprize, poisoned their swords; after which each man went his way towards that place where he was to strike his blow.

Moawiyah is
wounded, but
recovers.

Barak arriving at Damascus, gained admittance as one of Moawiyah's retinue; and on the appointed day, perceiving a favourable opportunity, he smote him in the reins. This event threw the courtiers into the greatest consternation;

consternation ; but the wound was not mortal ;
and though the sword was poisoned, he had
such speedy and effectual assistance, that in a
short time he was perfectly cured.

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It is related that the surgeon who was
called in to dress him, having searched and
considered the wound, gave him his choice
either to have it cauterized, or to drink a po-
tion that would render him incapable of gene-
ration. Moawiyah without hesitation chose
the latter, and had no other children than
such as were born previous to his assassi-
nation.

As to the assassin he was immediately
seized, for he neither strove to conceal or de-
fend himself, but readily confessed the plot
with such an unconcern as amazed those who
were appointed to examine him. He was
condemned to have his hands and feet cut off ;
after which, further punishment was inflicted
on him, and it is said he survived the loss of
his limbs many years, and was married*.

Punishment of
the assassin.

Amru-ebn-Beker, who had undertaken to
assassinate Amru-ebn-al-As, missed his blow
by an accident. For the latter having been
seized with a violent cholick on the day fixed
for his assassination, did not go to the mosque

Amru escapes
by a mistake
of the assassin.

* It is related that one of Moawiyah's friends, hearing in
what manner Barak had been punished, and that he had ta-
ken a wife, said, it was by no means reasonable that the
assassin, who had prevented Moawiyah from having children,
should have any of his own, and that he killed him with
his own hand. Ockley's History of the Saracens vol. II.
fol. 74.

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to perform the office, but sent one of his friends, whom he desired to officiate in his stead. The assassin not knowing him, and mistaking him for Amru, gave him a wound, of which he dropped down dead. The murderer, who did not fly the place, was immediately seized, and being informed that he had killed Charijah, he said, without the least concern, "I designed Amru, but God designed another."

Abdalrah-
man enters in-
to a league
with a wo-
man, who en-
courages him
in his design
to kill Ali.

The third of these conspirators, Abdalrahman, was more successful in the execution of his wicked designs against Ali, than his two companions; for being arrived at Cufah, he hired lodgings at the house of a woman whose nearest relations had been killed at the battle of Naharwan, and who on that account entertained a violent inclination of being revenged on the Caliph. Abdalrahman having met with an opportunity of sounding her inclinations, which he found quite favourable to his designs, frankly confessed to her that he was come thither with a full resolution to rid them of the author of their misfortunes.

The woman, pleased at this resolution, promised him her utmost assistance. Abdalrahman, with a view to fix her more firmly in his interest, made her an overture of marriage. She did not much decline the offer, but answered, that she required of the man who proposed to take her to wife three things as a dowry; namely, three thousand drachmas of silver,

silver, a slave of each sex, and Ali's head. Abdalrahman instantly accepted the conditions, and at the time appointed for executing his design, she joined with him two other men, named Darwan and Shabib, to bear him company, and assist him in case of need.

ALI.
Hegyra 40.
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It is said that Ali, during all the month of Ramadan, in which he was killed, had frequent prefages of his death, and had more than once dropped words to that purpose, when he was in private with his friends. It was visible to all about him that he was overwhelmed with the deepest melancholy, and that he had great inward conflicts. He frequently talked to himself, and was once overheard to say, "Alas! my heart, there is need of patience, for there is no remedy against death."

Ali's prefages
of his ap-
proaching
death.

On that day which was to terminate the life of the unfortunate Caliph, he left his house early in the morning to go to the mosque. As he crossed his court-yard, a great number of domestic birds uttered loud cries, which being observed by one of his slaves, he threw a stick at them to make them quiet, but the Caliph said to him, "Let them alone, for their cries are only lamentations foreboding my death."

The three assassins waited for Ali at the door of the mosque, and as he was ready to enter, they feigned a quarrel amongst themselves, and drew their swords. Darwan made a stroke at Ali, but missed him, and the blow

He is assassi-
nated.

ALI.
Hegyra 40.
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blow fell on the gate of the mosque. Abdalrahman struck him on the head, in the very place where he had before received a wound at the battle of Ahzab, which was fought in Mahomet's time, and the stroke was mortal.

Two of his
murderers are
taken, and
punished.

The blow given, the three villains fled without being apprehended. Darwan crept home, where he was killed by a person who had seen him with his sword drawn against Ali, and Shabib ran away with so much speed, that he escaped, and was never taken.

As to Abdalrahman, he seemed at first terrified at the thoughts of the crime he had committed, and strove to conceal himself in a corner of the mosque, but he was soon found with his sword drawn. For some time that assassin stoutly denied the fact, but he shortly afterwards openly confessed it, and was brought before Ali, who delivered him into the custody of his eldest son Hassan, with orders to let him want for nothing, and that if he died of his wound, the murderer should not be put to a painful and lingering death, but should be executed at one blow. Ali died about the fifth day after he was wounded, and Ali's commands were punctually executed*.

As

* This is the account given by D'Herbelot of the death of that assassin, which he probably took from Persian authors. But Tabari and Abulpheda, authors of great note amongst the Arabians, relate it in a very different manner. Abulpheda says that his hand was first cut off, and then his foot on the opposite side: that next they put out his eyes with a red hot iron, then cut out his tongue, and afterwards burned him;

As to the Caliph's person, he had a very red face, large eyes, a prominent belly; his head was bald, but his beard thick, and his breast hairy. His physiognomy was pleasing, florid, and youthful, and his countenance was usually covered with a smile.

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Description of
Ali's person.

Amongst the surnames or honourable titles which the Mussulmen bestow on Ali, there are two principal ones, to wit, Wasi, and Mortada, or Mortadi.* The first of which signifies in Arabic, legatee, mandatary, executor of a man's will, and heir, that is of Mahomet. The other means, beloved by, or acceptable to God; and even in his life time they called him Esed-Allâh-Algalib, the victorious lion of God. His followers have also given him other titles; the Shiites in particular (who might be called his adorers) call him Faid-al-Anwar, the distributor of lights or graces; and in Persian, Shah Mordman, or the king of men.

Titles be-
stowed on the
Caliph.

However, these great eulogies did not prevent his name, and that of all his family,

to which he adds, the curse of God be upon him. The account given by Abulpheda seems much the more probable, considering the heinousness of the crime, and the temper of that people. For though it is not impossible that Ali might give such orders, yet it is scarce credible that they were so mercifully executed: but after what manner soever he was put to death; the hereticks consider him as a martyr.

Ockley's History of the Saracens. vol. II. fol. 78.

* From whence European travellers have corruptly called him Mortis Ali, which the readers have mistaken for his name. Ockley vol. II. fol. 81.

from

ALI.
Hegyra 40.
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from being cursed, and their persons excommunicated in all the mosques of the empire, under the dominion of the house of Ommiyah, from Moawiyah to the time of Omar-ebn-Abdalaziz (the eight Caliph of that family) who suppressed this solemn malediction.

There were also some other Caliphs of the race of Abbas, who expressed a great aversion to Ali, and all his posterity*. On the contrary, the Fatemite Caliphs of Egypt caused his name to be joined with that of Mahomet, in the publication of the times of prayer, which they made from the minarets of their mosques.

Place of Ali's
sepulchre.

Ali was buried near Cufah, and it is said that his sepulchre was kept hid during the reign of all the princes of the house of Ommiyah, and that it was not discovered till the reign of the Abassians, which is scarce credible. However, in the year of the Hegyra 376. A. C. 977, Samfam Aldoulat, a prince of the race of the Buians, who reigned at Bagdat under the Caliph Thâi, built a sumptuous monument over it, which the Persians generally call Kunbud-Faid-Alanwar, the dome of the dispenser of lights and graces. And though the tomb of Ali is so well known to be near Cufah, yet some of his sect believe him to be still alive, and affirm that he will

* Namely, Motaded, and Motawakel, to whom they say he appeared in a dream, and threatened them with his indignation.

come at the end of the world, and fill the the earth with justice. Others are so extravagant as to make him a divine person. The more moderate, indeed, say that he is not truly God, but that in many things he partakes of the divine nature.

A L I.

Hegyra 40.
Ch. ær. 660.

Ali is held in great reputation for wisdom amongst all the Mahometans. There is extant of his writing a centiloquium, or a hundred sentences*, which have been translated from the Arabic into Turkish and Persian, and the other languages of Upper Asia. But the most celebrated piece is intituled Jeffre-Jame: it is written upon parchment in mysterious characters, intermixed with figures, wherein are said to be contained all the important events that have happened or shall happen from the beginning of Mussulmanism to the end of the world. Jaafer Sadec has deciphered (in some manner) a part of this parchment, (which is deposited in the hands of Ali's family.) As to the entire explication of it, that in their opinion is reserved for the 12th Imam, who is surnamed, by way of excellence, the Mohdi, or Grand Director. This Imam hath appeared amongst them: but they believe that God, having taking him under his protection at the time he was persecuted by the Caliphs of Bagdat, carried him

Works of
which Ali was
the author.

* There is likewise a collection of verses under the title of Anwar Alokail, and in the bodleian library is a large book of his sentences.

Ockley, vol. II. fol. 84.

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away into a place unknown to them, and that he will not return till the last day, in order to bring the whole world to embrace Mahometism.

Maxims of
Ali.

Besides the books we have mentioned, we find in authors many sentences and apophthegms under the name of Ali, which are full of good sense and instruction, and clearly manifest the rectitude of his heart.

The author of Rabi Alakyar quotes the following, which is one of the most instructive; “ He that would be rich without means, powerful without subjects, and subject without a master, let him serve God, and he will find these three things.”

He one day made a reply, which might have been sufficient to have silenced all such as reproached him on account of the feuds and divisions which had prevailed in the state from the beginning of his reign. One of his captains having pertly asked him, why the reigns of Abubecre and Omar, his predecessors, were so peaceable, and the reign of Othman and his own were so full of troubles; Ali wisely answered, “ The reason is plain; Othman and I served Abubecre and Omar, during their reigns: and Othman and I had none to serve us but you, and such as are like you.”

There is also another maxim of Ali (in the book intitled Rabi Alakyar) which strikes at the conduct of those who, from a spirit of party, in the sequel formed the sect of Ali.

Those

Those sectaries, to distinguish themselves from the rest of the Mussulmen, wore a turban of a different colour and particular fashion, and also traced their hair after a manner quite different from the rest of the disciples of Mahomet. “Take great care,” said he, “never to separate yourselves from the fellowship of the other Mussulmen; for he that separates himself from them, belongs to the devil, as the sheep that leave the flock belong to the wolf; therefore give no quarter to him that marcheth under the standard of schism, though he hath my turban on his head, for he carries with him the infallible mark of a man that is out of the right way.”

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This sentence manifestly condemns those who vaunt themselves for being of his sect, such as are the Persians at this time, some of the princes of the Usbecks, beyond the river Gihon, and several mighty monarchs in the Indies; who, by putting on Ali's turban, have separated themselves from the rest of the Mussulmen.

Hosain Waez also recites this passage of Ali, in his paraphrase and commentary upon the Alcoran; “God hath given to men two Imams, that is to say two pontiffs, or mediators between him and them: the first is the prophet, who is gone and is no more amongst them; the second which remains, and shall continue always with them, is prayer, which they make to obtain pardon of sins.”

These

ALI.
Hegyra 40.
Ch. ær. 660.

These sectaries mutually bestow on each other the name of Shiites*, which properly signifies a scandalous reprobate sect; but it hath been particularly applied to the sectaries of Ali, who have from time to time raised great disturbances in the mussulman empire, in order to set on the throne the descendants of that Caliph, to whom alone they assert the throne of right belongs. Of this frequent examples will hereafter appear, when we treat of the dynasties which they have formed, under the several denominations of Alians, Fatimites, Edrissites, and Ishmaelites.

Ali, as it has been mentioned in the life of Mahomet, married Fatima, the daughter of that prophet. After her death he had several other wives, among whom he had fifteen sons and eighteen daughters. Fatimah brought him three sons, to wit, Hassan, Hossein and Mohassan, the latter of whom died in his infancy. The two former (as well as Ben Haniphiah, Abbas, and Amru, his children by other wives) left posterity behind them, and Hassan and Hossein, and their descendants, are remarkable in the mussulman history, on account of the eminent persons they produced, and the revolutions they occasioned in the several ages of Mahometism.

* The Arabians who call themselves Sonnites, that is, observers of the tradition and orthodox, do not allow the name, but call themselves Medheb; that is, a sect which follows approved opinions: and the sect of Ali call themselves Adâliyah, which signifies the religion of them that follow justice, and the right side. Ockley vol. II. page. 88.

H A S S A N.

The F I F T H C A L I P H.

HA S S A N, eldest son of the late Caliph, was unanimously chosen to succeed his father. So soon as Ali's friends perceived his wound to be mortal, they would have prevailed on him to name a successor; but, besides the reasons he might have not to nominate any person to a dignity, in the possession of which he had met with so many difficulties and crosses, he was resolved to follow the example of the prophet, and not to name a person to succeed him. This resolution he imparted to his friends, and told them, that into the hands of the people he resigned the power of appointing a ruler, whose reign he hoped would be more undisturbed than his had been.

Hegyra 40.
Ch. ær. 660.

Ali refuses to
name a suc-
cessor.

Hassan having been thus appointed Caliph without opposition, the people swore fealty to him, after he had taken an oath to stand by the Koran, and the tradition of the apostle. But how great soever his satisfaction might be to ascend the throne by so universal a consent of the people, yet he soon experienced that he was very unfit to bear with dignity the weight of a crown.

Hassan chosen
Caliph.

So mild and peaceable was his disposition, that he had an aversion to all noise and tumult,

Character of
Hassan.

HASSAN.
Hegyra 40.
Ch. ær. 660.

mult, and in particular to those of war. And as he rather inherited his father's piety than his valour, so he seemed fitter for a mosque, than the command of an army.

He marches
against Moa-
wiyah.

However he was soon forced to take up arms, on the entreaties of his subjects, who earnestly required that the war with Moawiyah should be renewed. He therefore began his march towards Syria at the head of a strong army, preceded by twelve thousand men under Kais, whom he appointed to command them.

Moawiyah having also taken the field, marched out to meet the Caliph. Kais with his twelve thousand soldiers (though greatly inferior in number to the troops of Moawiyah) acted with so much prudence and conduct as to keep the enemy at bay, without risking a battle; and some smart skirmishes having passed, Kais strongly intrenched himself, and quietly waited the arrival of the main army.

A tumult in
his army.

In a short time Hassan joined him, and preparations were made to attack the Syrians. But one of the Caliph's men having been murdered in that juncture, and he proposing to punish the offenders, the troops mutinied, and the officers engaged in the dispute: In a word, they came to extremities even in the Caliph's presence; and so greatly were they wanting in respect both to his person and dignity, that they violently threw him from his seat, and it was with difficulty he escaped, after having received a wound.

This

This accident having happened near Ma-
 daïen, (whither he had brought his army) the Caliph retired to the castle there, to secure himself from the fury of the mutineers. But that step had like to have been fatal to him : the governor's nephew strongly incited his uncle to take away the Caliph's life, but he would not hear of so base a proposal. The nephew would then have prevailed on him at least to take Hassan prisoner, and send him bound to Moawiyah ; but this he also generously refused, urging the sacred laws of hospitality, the laws of honour, in a word, how shameful a thing it would be, so to betray the son of the daughter of God's apostle. He therefore declared that he would not only leave the Caliph at liberty, but also procure him all the comforts and conveniencies in his power.

HASSAN.

Hegyra. 41.
Ch. ær. 661.The Caliph
flies to Ma-
daïen.

The mind of Hassan was filled with disquietude. The insolence of his troops, the contempt they would shew for him should he leave the insult unpunished, the danger he foresaw in inflicting punishment on the guilty, and moreover the great dislike he had to continuing a war, the first events of which had proved so unprosperous to him, conspired to make him form a resolution of abdicating a dignity which he had never been ambitious of obtaining, and in defence of which he had not the least inclination to sacrifice his quiet, and much less to expose his life to the hazard of war.

Hassan re-
solves to ab-
dicate.

HASSAN.
Hegyra 41.
Ch. ar. 661.

Hossein, his youngest brother, to whom he communicated his design, used his utmost endeavours to prevent him from carrying it into execution: but though he remonstrated to him the great disparagement and reflection it would cast on the memory of their father, Hassan persisted in his resolution. He foresaw that by a voluntary abdication, he should make a friend of Moawiyah, who out of gratitude would not fail amply to reward him for making so considerable a sacrifice, which would enable him to pass a quiet easy life in some obscure corner, a condition well befitting a man, who had neither courage nor ambition.

Moawiyah, who had spies even in the Caliph's court, was soon made acquainted with Hassan's design; and for that reason he ordered his generals to make no attempt on the Caliph's army, but to keep on the defensive. In the mean time he set his emissaries to work, who so artfully managed the intrigue, that the treaty was concluded before it was publickly known to be in agitation.

Conditions
required by
Hassan of
Moawiyah
in return for
the surrender-
ing up the
Caliphate to
him.

Hassan having thus fixed his resolution, wrote to Moawiyah; he informed him that the grief he felt to see the faithful Mussulmen exposed to the calamities of a civil war, he was induced to put an end to the dispute by sacrificing his own interest; that he was determined to resign the throne, and that in order to prevent a continu-
ance

ance of the war, which might happen from the attempts of a new rival, he had resolved to resign it into his hands. He added, that as so valuable a present merited some grateful return, he had three conditions to require of him; first, that Moawiyah should give him all the money in the treasury of Cufah; secondly, a considerable estate in Persia; and thirdly, that Moawiyah should make no reproachful reflection upon his father Ali.

HASSAN.
Hegyra 41.
Ch. ær. 661.

As Moawiyah could not pay too dear for an abdication so advantageous to him, he readily granted the conditions*, and a treaty was forthwith drawn up, which was signed by both parties. This being done, Moawiyah and Hassan went together to Cufah, where the ceremony of the abdication was to be performed.

A general assembly of the people was appointed to be held in the chief mosque, when Hassan having mounted the pulpit, and given praise and glory to God for inspiring him with the means of restoring peace to the Mussulmen, expressed himself in the following terms: "Moawiyah contended with me touching the Caliphate, to which I had a greater right than he; but I chose rather to surrender it to him, and thereby spare the effusion of mussulman blood. The world is

Hassan abdicates the Caliphate.

* It is said that Moawiyah refused to grant the third article; upon which Hassan requested that he would at least forbear to make such reflections in his hearing; which Moawiyah promised, but did not perform. Ockley's History of the Saracens, vol. II fol. 95.

HASSAN.
Hegyra 41.
Ch. ær. 661.

liable to changes, and even this affair also hath a time prefixed for its duration*.”

These last words had like to have raised a quarrel. Moawiyah interrupted the Caliph, commanded him to sit down, and told him it was imprudent to give the people to understand that the step he was then taking might be productive of fresh disturbances.

Hassan, passing over unnoticed this reproach of Moawiyah, coolly resumed his discourse, and closed it with informing the people that he had three things to lay to their charge: first, the murder of his father; secondly, the affronts offered to his own person; and thirdly, the robbing him of his goods. For though Moawiyah had promised him the treasure of Cusah, they refused to deliver it up to him, insisting that it was their property, and could not be alienated without their consent.

The Cusians
refuse to give
the treasure to
Hassan.

Moawiyah
makes him
amends.

This refusal of the Cusians was grievous to Hassan, and indeed Moawiyah could not but be highly dissatisfied with it. However he did not think fit in any manner to controvert their design. For as he was possessed of the

* It may be inferred from this account, that Hassan voluntarily made the above harangue. But Tabari El-Makin says, it was owing to a hint given to Moawiyah by Amru-ebn-Alas of the necessity of such a testimony of the abdication; which being importunately urged, Moawiyah consented to it against his own opinion, and some authors say he was so displeased with the close of Hassan's speech, that he severely chid Amru for pressing him to it, and others say he was never afterwards heartily reconciled to Amru.

Ockley, vol. II. fol. 96.

Caliphate,

Caliphate, which he had so long aimed at, his whole care was employed in establishing his power; and he freely assigned to Hassan a revenue of about three millions per annum; to which he from time to time added very valuable presents.

HASSAN.

Hegyra 41.
Ch. ær. 661.

Hassan departed from Cufah with Hossain his brother; they retired to Medina, where they led a private and retired life. However, Moawiyah strove to rouse them from their state of inactivity, when the Kharegites (those hereticks that gave Ali so much disturbance) took up arms against the new Caliph. He wrote to Hassan to march out against them, and to restrain them till he could bring up his army. But Hassan answered, that he had given over all public affairs in order to avoid war, and that if he had been inclined to fight at all, he should have made war against him.

Hassan and
his brother
retire to Me-
dina.

In this manner he passed seven or eight years, that is to say all the rest of his days, at Medina: he died in the forty-ninth year of the Hegyra, being but forty seven-years old. It is affirmed that his days were hastened by Moawiyah, who suborned his wife to poison him. It is also said he was induced to commit that crime, to get rid of a promise he had made to Hassan, that he would not name a successor during Hassan's life, and would refer the election to a certain number of persons whom Hassan was to appoint.

Hassan's
death.

HASSAN.
 Hegyra 41.
 Ch. ær. 661.
 Moawiyah
 stubborn
 Hassan's wife
 to poison him.

When Moawiyah had fixed himself on the throne, he formed a resolution of making the Caliphate hereditary in his family, and of naming Yezid his son to be his successor; and in order to avoid the reproaches of Hassan on account of his breaking the conditions stipulated between them, he resolved to put an end to that prince's life. That he might be more sure of success, he practised with Hassan's wife, and so won her over to his interest by a feigned promise of marriage*, that she consented to poison her husband.

The blow struck, she required of Moawiyah a performance of his promise, but he treated her request with contempt, and offered her a large sum of money, which she accepted of, for her pains.

When the time of Hassan's death drew near, his brother, who perceived he was poisoned, earnestly begged he would inform him who had administered the deadly potion, and swore he would take suitable vengeance on him: but Hassan answered with great calmness, "O brother! the life of this world is made up of nights which speedily vanish away: let the guilty wretch alone, till he and I appear together before God."

He directed by his will that his body should be buried near Mahomet his grand-

* Ockley says that Hassan's wife was suborned by Yezid the son of Moawiyah, who promised her marriage; but when she had murdered her husband, he wisely refused to trust himself in her embraces.

father. Aïesha at first consented to it, but finding that the whole family of Ommiyah opposed it, she afterwards retracted her consent: she declared that the house where Mahomet was buried was her property, and Hassan's body should not be laid there, so they laid him in the common burying place.

HASSAN.
Hegyra 41.
Ch. ær 661.

Aïesha will
not permit
Hassan to be
buried near
the prophet,

As his reign was of no longer duration than six months, or thereabouts, some authors have not reckoned him amongst the number of Caliphs. But I have followed Ebn-Athir, and other writers, who have not thought fit to omit him: for he actually enjoyed the supreme dignity, and though his reign was short, yet he was as much a Caliph as any of those who possessed the throne many years.

Hassan had many children *, the most famous of whom was Abdallah, whose posterity caused great disturbances in the mussulman empire.

As to Hossein, his branch was chief of the sect of Ali, because it maintained possession of the office of Imam †, the principal ecclesiastical dignity among the Mussulmen. It is related of this Caliph, that a woman having once presented him with a bunch of fine

* Ockley says fifteen males and five females.—He adds, that his wives were all remarkably fond of him, though he frequently divorced them, and married others.

† Some amongst the sectaries of Ali drew the descent of the Imams from Abdallah, one of his children, who had a son named Yahia, but the Persians will have the succession to pass from Hassan to his brother Hossein.

Ockley vol. II. fol. 105.

HASSAN. herbs, he asked her if she was a free woman, she told him she was a slave, but that the present she had made him was rare and curious. Hassan gave her her liberty, and said to those present, "We have received this instruction from God himself, that we ought to return to those who give us gifts, something of more value than that which they give us". Meaning that this moral instruction is couched in the Koran, which the Mussulmen look on as the word of God.

They also relate a wonderful instance of his moderation. A slave having spilled a dish of scalding broth on him as he sat at table, instantly fell at his feet, and repeated these words of the Koran, "Paradise is open to those that govern their passion". Hassan answered, I am not in passion. The slave went on, "and to those who pardon offences"; I pardon yours, said Hassan. The slave went on to the end of the verse, which says: "God loves those above all who do good to such as have offended them". Hassan concluded: since it is so, I give you your liberty, and four hundred drachmas of silver.

The Mussulmen quote this sentence of Hassan; "The tears which are let fall through devotion, should not be wiped off, nor the water which remains upon the body after legal washing; because this water makes the face of the faithful shine, when they appear in the presence of God."

M O A W I Y A H.

The S I X T H C A L I P H.

SO soon as Hassan had solemnly surrendered the Caliphate, Moawiyah took possession of that dignity, and rendered it hereditary in his family, whereas it was before him elective. In his person began the dynasty of the Ommiyans, so famous in the arabian history, which took its name from Ommiyah, who was great-grandfather to Moawiyah.

MOAWIYAH.

Hegyra 41.
Ch. ær. 661.Commence-
ment of the
Dynasties of
the Ommi-
yans.

The father of this Caliph was named Abu-Sofian, and was one of the chiefs of the noble tribe of the Coraischites, of which Mahomet was also. When that prophet took up arms in defence of his doctrine, the Coraischites who were extremely averse to it, took up arms also, and appointed Abu Sofian generalissimo of their forces.

That general signalized himself on several occasions ; but in spite of all his efforts, Mahomet was almost ever victorious. At last he was convinced of the truth of Mahomet's pretensions, and on the day of the famous victory of Bedre, he publickly embraced Mahometism.

The example of so considerable a proselyte had the greatest influence on the rest of the tribe, who, for the most part, became followers

MOAWIYAH. followers of Mahomet. It is related that
 Hegyra 41. Abu-Sofian after his conversion, begged
 Ch. ær. 661. three things of Mahomet. The first, that
 as he had commanded the forces of the Infidels against the possessors of the true religion, he might now (in order to expiate his crime) command the army of the Faithful against the Unbelievers. In the next place he requested that the prophet would appoint Moawiyah to be his secretary; and his third request was, that Mahomet would take to wife one of his daughters named Gafah. The two former petitions were granted, but Mahomet excused himself, and declined granting the last; alledging some reason, (which the arabian author has not mentioned) why he could not legally comply with his request. Abu-Sofian was accordingly appointed commander of the troops, and Moawiyah to be Mahomet's secretary, in which post he continued many years.

After the death of his father, Moawiyah gained so great a reputation under the Caliphs, Mahomet's successors, that on the conquest of Syria, he was appointed governor of that province; and during his government he gained so many friends, and raised his power to so high a pitch, that at last he caused himself to be proclaimed Caliph in a most irregular and unconstitutional manner. By means of his consummate bravery and policy, he removed every obstacle in his way to the throne, and, spight of the utmost efforts

efforts of his enemies, he prevented any ill effects that might have resulted from the insufficiency of his election.

MOAWIYAH.

Hegyra 41.

Ch. ær. 661.

The beginning of his reign was disturbed by an insurrection of the Kharegites, who were, as we have already observed, declared enemies to all subordination; and who were not properly dealt with at their rise. Ali had indeed beat them; but had not effectually rooted them out. And as the weak conduct of the last Caliph was by no means calculated to render him formidable, they were inspired with a fresh inclination to take up arms against the government.

Hegyra 42.

Ch. ær. 662.

A new insurrection of the Kharegites.

Moawiyah, unwilling to fall into the same fault which his predecessor had committed, made the most speedy preparations to reduce a party, who so openly defied his authority, and sent the Syrians out against them. But the success did not answer his expectations; the Syrians were defeated in several actions, and the Kharegites became more insolent, and were more to be feared.

Upon this the Caliph had recourse to the inhabitants of Cufah, and the people of Irak, and intreated them to give a proof of their sincerity and obedience to him, by opposing a set of wretches who set at nought all law and religion, and who, being under no restraint, had made war against them without the least pretext, and might one day become masters of their country.

Moawiyah prevails on the inhabitants of Cufah and Irak to take up arms against the Kharegites.

These

MOAWIYAH.

Hegyra 42.

Chr. ær. 662.

These remonstrances had the desired effect. The Cufians and Irakians took up arms, and marched out in battle-array against the Kharegites. The latter, reflecting that the junction of those troops with the Syrians would form too powerful a party to be resisted, made some attempts to prevail on them to remain neuter; and as they knew that the greatest part of them had acknowledged Moawiyah from no other motive than the hopes of extinguishing the flames of civil war, and that they in no wise approved the manner in which he raised himself to the throne, they sent to them a deputy, who took a very artful method to persuade them that it would be most prudent and advantageous for them, not to engage in the war they had declared against Moawiyah.

After many conferences had been held, the Kharegite deputy told them, that considering their opinion of things, no prejudice could ensue to them by their not engaging in the dispute: "For", said he, "is not Moawiyah our common enemy? let us therefore make war upon him: if we kill him, you are rid of a tyrant, and if he destroys us, you will be free from all disquietude on our account".

The Kharegites are totally defeated.

The Irakians refused to lend an ear to the advice of the Kharegites; they thought it a matter of the utmost importance, and the business of every rational man, to join in the destruction of a sect who strove to be independant of law, religion and society.

They

They therefore furiously attacked them; and after several actions, in which each party gave the most signal proofs of valour, at last a bloody battle was fought, which decided the fate of the Kharegites. The Irakians gained a compleat victory, and the opposite party was almost totally exterminated.

MOAWIYAH.

Hegyra 42.

Chr. ær. 662.

After the destruction of this sect, Arabia for some time enjoyed a calm. However, little is to be met with in history, worth observation, from the time of that battle to the forty-third year of the Hegyra. And even that year is remarkable only on account of the death of the famous Amru-ebn-al-As, so renowned for his courage and skill in the art of war. He was one of the first heroes of Mussulmanism; and Mahomet used to say of him, (as tradition goes) “That there was no truer mussulman, nor none more stedfast in the faith, than Amru.”

Hegyra 43.

Chr. ær. 663.

Death of
Amru.

He was justly celebrated by historians on account of the quickness of his natural parts, his valour, his capacity, and his exploits in Egypt; even the misfortunes he underwent furnished the writers of those days with a subject for eulogiums. He died in his government of Egypt * in which he was con-

* Amru was sent by Omar into Egypt, which he conquered, and was made governor thereof. Othman continued him in that post four years, and then dismissed him: upon which he retired, and led a private life in Palestine. After Othman's death, he went over to Moawiyah on his invitation, and had (as has been already related) a considerable share in the controversy between Ali and Moawiyah.

MOAWIYAH. continued by Moawiyah, together with the possession and property of all the revenues of that opulent province, on condition only of maintaining, at his proper expence, a sufficient body of troops, for defence of the country.

Hegyra 43.
Ch. ær. 663.

Besides those qualities which bespeak a great general, Amru possessed others which gained him great credit and esteem amongst his countrymen. He greatly excelled in eloquence and poetry. Before he embraced Mahometism, he wrote a satirical lampoon against Mahomet. This step he afterwards greatly regretted, and even at the time of his death, he made a very pathetic and masculine discourse to his children, in which he laments his having exercised his wits in exposing the prophet.

Rise of Ziyàd.

About this time Moawiyah formed a resolution of acknowledging publicly as his brother, a Mussulman, a person of merit, named Ziyàd, who had distinguished himself amongst the Arabians for his abilities, masterly eloquence, and military exploits. He was the son of Abu-Sofian as well as Moawiyah, but as his birth was illegitimate, Abu-Sofian had not owned him *; for which reason they gave him the name of Ziyàd-ben-Abihi, that is to say, the son of an unknown person.

He gave early proofs of what he would one day be. Amru, who was a very good

* It is said, he durst not own him for fear of Omar's severity.

judge of mankind, having once heard him MOAWIYAH.
 speak in an assembly of the companions of Hegyra 43.
 the prophet, with great force and solidity, Chr. ær. 663.
 took much notice of him, and publickly said,
 that had he been of the tribe of the Cora-
 ischites, he would be fit to govern the Ara-
 bians.

The Caliphs whom he served did not fail
 to reward his merit. He above all other
 things distinguished himself on account of
 his conduct in Persia, at the time he was
 employed by Ali to transact some public af-
 fairs in that extensive province ; in the ma-
 nagement of which he shewed himself to be
 master of such rare talents, as soon acquired
 him the greatest reputation.

When Hassan abdicated the Caliphate, Zi- He sides with
 yad absolutely refused to acknowledge Moa- the Alians.
 wiyah, though he was his natural brother.
 The regard he bore to the memory of Ali,
 his benefactor, induced him to slight the
 new Caliph, and to join the party of the
 Alians.

Moawiyah, who was thoroughly sensible of Moawiyah
 Ziyad's merit, was grieved to think how pre- gains him to
 judicial an enemy of his abilities must prove his side.
 to his party. He therefore resolved to se-
 cure him in his interest, and imparted his
 design to Mogeirah-ebn-Said, governor of
 Cufah, who readily offered his service to
 bring over Ziyad from the party of the
 Alians : and Mogeirah was the more likely
 to succeed, as he had kept up a correspon-
 dence

MOAWIYAH. dence with Ziyad, from the time he
 Hegyra 43. had done him a piece of service in a matter
 Ch. ær. 663. of great consequence *.

Mogeirah made so good use of his friendship with Ziyad, and offered him such advantageous terms, that at last they prevailed on him to join Moawiyah, and acknowledge him as Caliph. He was received at court with all possible marks of esteem and respect, and his brother assured him that he would soon put him in a condition of occupying the chief posts of the state, without the least fear of being for the future reproached with the baseness of his original.

He acknow-
 ledges him for
 his brother.

In consequence of this promise he caused proper witnesses to be examined in an assembly of the people, to prove that Ziyad was his brother by the father's side †, and after a solemn and formal enquiry it was openly declared that he was the real son of Abu-

* Mogeirah was accused of committing adultery. Ziyad, who was then Cadi or judge of the place where the crime was committed, either through favour, or for want of legal proof, found means to acquit him, and caused the witnesses to be severely scourged as calumniators. See Sale's Translation of the Koran, chap. 24th, entitled Light, fol. 287.

† The purport of the evidence was, that Abu-Sofian in the days of ignorance, before drinking of wine was made a sin by the Koran, travelling in Thayef, refreshed himself at a public house, where he lay with Ziyad's mother, then married to a Greek slave. The old man that kept the house was alive, and gave evidence touching the conversation of Abu-Sofian with Somyah; and his evidence was so strong, that it would have amounted to a sufficient proof in a case of impotency.

Ockley, vol. II. p. 114.
 Sofian;

Sofian; and Moawiyah acknowledged him to be his own brother, sprung as well as himself from the noble blood of the Coraischites, and consequently capable of enjoying the chief posts in the state *. MOAWIYAH.
Hegyra 43.
Ch. ær. 663.

Moawiyah's relations were greatly disgusted at and bitterly complained of this step, which at the same time that it procured to Ziyad much greater honour and advantages than he could otherwise have expected, had brought on an enquiry highly disadvantageous to the character of old Abu-Sofian, (who had lived and died with a good reputation) as well as a disparagement on the whole family.

Moawiyah disregarded the murmurs and complaints that were uttered on this account, and thought only of usefully employing the great talents of Ziyad for the good of the state and the advancement of his own interest.

He immediately appointed Ziyad to be governor of Basorah, whither it was necessary to send without delay some person of resolution and ability, who, by a due exertion of his authority, might put a stop to the disorders that had long reigned there. Hegyra 44.
Ch. ær. 664.
Ziyad is made
governor of
Basorah.

* It was observed by Abulpheda, that this was the first time the Koran was openly violated in a judicial way of proceeding; for the child belonged to his legal father, the Greek slave that married his mother: And Mahomet has left it as a decision in such cases, "The child to the blankets, and the whore to the stone:" meaning, that the child should be brought up, and the whore stoned.

MOAWIYAH. Abdallah-ebn-Amer had been lately removed from the government of that city, because through too great a mildness and gentleness of disposition, he had suffered the country to be quite over-run with thieves and murderers. The Caliph sent in his room Hareth, who made some attempts to remedy the evils caused by Abdallah's lenity; but they had taken so deep root, that he could not possibly pluck them up. At last Ziyad was sent, as the most likely man to draw the sword, and chastise their insolence with exemplary punishments.

He disperses the robbers that infested the city and its neighbourhood. When he arrived at Basorah, things were in such a condition that it was not safe to walk the streets, especially in the night-time, which was full of tumult and bloodshed. He therefore called a general assembly of the people, and in a severe speech * gave them to understand, that he was provided of the proper remedies to put an end to the insolent crimes which were continually committed there; but before he administered them, he was willing to inform those who were guilty, that they would do well to quit the city forthwith, for he would not spare one that fell into his hands.

* Ziyad had an excellent talent at speaking in public, being reckoned the best orator next to Ali, who had not his equal. One of the polite arábians used to say, that he never heard a man speak well, but he wished he would have done, being in pain for him lest he should flag, and injure himself by speaking worse, Ziyad only excepted, for the more he spoke, the more he excelled.

He

He next published an order, forbidding all persons, of what quality soever, to appear in the streets or any public place after the hour of evening-prayer, on pain of death : and that his orders might be put in execution, he appointed a strong guard to go the rounds, and put to death all they should find out of their houses after that hour.

MOAWIYAH.

Hegyra 44.

Chr. ær. 664.

This order might have been attended with inconveniencies, but as it was absolutely necessary that so great an evil should be remedied, it was rigorously put in execution. Two hundred persons were killed the first night ; and this severe example made so strong an impression on the inhabitants, that scarce any person stirred out of his house after the limited time ; however five were put to death the second night ; but the third night passed with great tranquillity, and not a man suffered the penalty. Thus peace and safety was restored to the city, and thefts and robberies were no longer heard of.

Moawiyah was the better pleased to find that order was restored in Basorah, as he was apprehensive his enemies would take advantage of the tumult and confusion which prevailed there, to decry his government, or perhaps increase their party by sending some of their adherents for that purpose to the city. The severity, and at the same time the prudence of Ziyad's conduct in quelling the many disorders which he had found in

Hegyra 45.

Chr. ær. 665.

He quells

the disorders

in several provinces.

MOAWYIAH. Basorah, induced the Caliph to have recourse to him to bring about the same advantageous change in Sejestan and Chorasan, provinces of Persia, and in Bahrein and Amman, provinces of Arabia. The Caliph must have entertained a very high opinion of Ziyad's abilities, when he bestowed on him so many posts at a time, one of which alone would have found full employment for the common run of men.

Hegyra 45.
Chr. ær. 665.

Nor did the Caliph unadvisedly bestow these employments on him; for though it might be supposed that he would have been overwhelmed by a multiplicity of business, yet he was superior to it all: and the more they committed to his care, the lighter was to him the burthen of his government. He was neither savage or cruel in his temper, though he executed strict justice; he did every thing in his power to maintain order, peace and tranquillity amongst the people; but at the same time he governed in a despotic manner, and would not suffer the least slight of his authority, or disobedience to his commands.

An example of this appears from the conduct of Hakem-ben-Amer, a mussulman captain. That officer having been sent by Ziyad to take a place *, succeeded in the enterprize, killed a great number of the enemy, and brought off all the riches of the inhabitants; of which he immediately

* Called mount Ashal.

sent advice to the governor. And Ziyad sent him back word, that the emperor of the faithful had commanded that all the gold and silver coin belonging to the booty should be laid apart, that it might be put into the treasury.

MOAWIYAH
Hegyra 45.
Ch. ær. 665.

This order being contrary to a decisive rule in the * Koran, where it is said in express terms that only a fifth part of the spoil should be reserved for the treasury, and the rest be divided amongst the captors, Hakem did not think fit to obey †; but after having reserved the fifth part, according to the text, he distributed the residue amongst his troops. Ziyad having been informed of this step, sent a person to arrest Hakem, and would doubtless have inflicted an exemplary punish-

* The eighth chapter of the Koran intitled the spoils. This chapter was occasioned by the high disputes touching the division of the spoils taken at the battle of Bedre, between the young men who fought, and the old men who had staid under the ensigns, the former insisting they were entitled to the whole, and the latter that they ought to have a share; and to end the contention Mahomet pretended to have received orders from heaven to divide the booty amongst them equally, after taking out a fifth part for the treasury. See Sale's translation of the Koran, chap. 8. fol. 139.

† He sent Ziyad word that the authority of the book of God was superior to the emperor of the faithful's letter. For it is said, that though the heavens and the earth conspire together against a servant of God who puts his trust in him, he will find him a secure place of refuge, and a means of deliverance. Having divided the spoil according to the text, he expected no mercy, and said, O God! if I may find favour in thy sight, take me. His request was granted, and he died quickly after. Ockley's History of the Saracens, vol. II. fol. 119. 120.

MOAWIYAH. ment on him for his disobedience, had not
 Hegyra 45. death soon taken him away
 Ch. ær. 665.

To this firmness and resolution of Ziyad the Caliph was therefore indebted for the establishment of his authority in many cities of the mussulman empire. He had the same obligation to divers other commanders whom he set over other places: but we are unable to give an historical account of the events which must have passed during that time, since the arabian authors have afforded us no light in that respect*.

Hegyra 46.
 Ch. ær. 666.

Moawiyah
 causes Abdar-
 rahman, the
 son of Kha-
 led, to be put
 to death.

They have been full as sparing even in regard to Moawiyah himself; they pass over several years of his Caliphate, in which they scarce mention him, and what they say is very little worth notice. For example, all we know of him in the 46th year of the Hegyra is, that having entertained a jealousy of Abdarrahan, son of the famous Khaled, who (being no ways inferior to his father either in point of courage or conduct) had

* This year died Zeid the son of Thabet, one of Mahomet's secretaries when he dictated the Koran. He wrote that copy which was used by the Imans at the command of Othman. Zeid was a man of the greatest parts of any of the age. He learned the Hebrew language in fifteen days, so as to be able to read the books of the Jews. He learned the Persian of one of Cosroes's ambassadors in eighteen days: and he learned Æthiopick, Greek, and Coptic of one of Mahomet's slaves. He was fifteen years old at the battle of the ditch. He was a most pleasant and facetious man at home, and the most reserved abroad. Once he saw the people coming from prayers, and he hastened to get out of the way like one that did not care to be seen. He used to say, he that doth not reverence men, will not reverence God. Ockley, vol. II. p. 120.

gained

gained the hearts of the soldiery, Moawiyah MOAWIYAH. tampered with a christian servant of his, Hegyra 46. under promise of a great reward *, to poison Ch. æ. 666. his master, who was then in Syria, whilst the Caliph was employed in an expedition against the Greeks. The conditions were punctually performed on both sides; but the slave did not long enjoy the reward of his perfidiousness. The son of Abdarrahan, who was also called Khaled, receiving information of his father's murder, went from Medina into Syria, and killed the assassin with his own hand. Upon this Moawiyah caused Khaled to be imprisoned, and did not set him at liberty till he had paid a pecuniary fine for the expiation of murder †

In a short time another event happened at Cufah, which made a great noise. Ziyad Ziyad insulted by the inhabitants of Cufah. being at the mosque in that city, ascended the pulpit, and made a speech to the people, which lasted till the hour of prayer. A Mussulman named Hejer (who was the strictest man then living in all things relating to the exercise of his religion) arose in the midst of the assembly, and cried out Salah, to prayers, and began to chant them, even whilst Ziyad was speaking: upon which the latter was forced to come down and

* To remit his tribute, and give him the lieutenancy of Hems.

† This is a common practice in mahometan countries, particularly in Persia, where the relations of the deceased may take their choice, either to have the murderer put into their hands to be put to death, or else to accept a pecuniary satisfaction. Vide Sale's Koran, chap. II. fol. 21.

MOAWIYAH. join with them, for the whole congregation
 Hegyra 46. followed Hejer.
 Ch. ær. 666.

He informs
 the Caliph of
 it, and retires
 to Basorah.

Ziyad at that time passed by the affront, but on his leaving the mosque he forthwith wrote a letter to Moawiyah, in which he aggravated the insult, informed the Caliph that Hejer was a man who paid no regard either to his sovereign, or those invested with his authority; that if he did not speedily take proper measures, the party of Ali would soon prevail in Cufah, and that Hejer was very capable of exciting the people to a revolt.

Upon this Ziyad forthwith retired to Basorah, to wait for the Caliph's answer, and left his lieutenant behind to manage public affairs in the best manner he could during his absence. But he soon received information that Hejer and some other inhabitants of Cufah had refused to acknowledge his deputy, and used to throw dust at him when he was in his pulpit.

He returns to
 Cufah, to
 seize the re-
 bels.

This information obliged Ziyad to come back to Cufah; he had received the Caliph's orders to imprison Hejer and his adherents, and calling an assembly of the people, he mounted the pulpit, and made them a very severe speech. He told them, that the government had too long winked at their insolent and disobedient behaviour; and as they were daily trampling upon the Caliph's authority, by setting at nought and insulting his lieutenants, it was high time to inflict an exemplary

emplary punishment on the guilty, and that he had received orders from the emperor of the faithful to see the same executed. MOAWIYAH
Hegyra 46.
Ch. ær. 666.

Hejer, who was a zealous friend to the Alians, was so enraged to hear Ziyad frequently give to Moawiyah the title of emperor of the faithful, that at last he cried out aloud in the assembly, "God curse thee, thou liest"; and at the same time he took up a handful of dust, and threw it in the governor's face.

Ziyad with great presence of mind contained his resentment; he coolly came down, went to prayers amongst the people, and quietly retired to the castle. The next day he sent a party to take and bring Hejer before him, but he, fearing what would happen, had called his friends about him and stood on his defence, and a smart skirmish ensued between them and Ziyad's soldiers; however they (who fought only with sticks and stones) could not long hold out against well-armed men; and several of the rebels having been put to the sword, the rest were intimidated, and Hejer with thirteen of his friends were taken, and being chained hands and feet, were sent to Moawiyah to be punished for having spoken reproachfully of the Caliph, affronted his Emir, (Ziyad) and affirmed that the government belonged of right to none but the family of Ali.

The Caliph called a council to deliberate on this affair, and opinions were divided. Punishment
of the rebels.

All

MOAWIYAH. All agreed that Hejer was guilty, but they differed as to the manner of punishing him. Some were for putting him to death; others were for banishing him and his adherents, and dispersing them through the several provinces of his extensive dominions. The former opinion prevailed, through the pressing instances of Ziyad, who in a letter he wrote to Moawiyah told him, that if he had any thoughts of preserving his authority in Irak, or of keeping that province, he must by no means think of using clemency on so important an occasion. He caused his letter to be backed by some of his friends at the Caliph's court, and the sentence of death was pronounced. The criminal's head was cut off*, and several of his adherents were executed at the same time: about six of them obtained their pardon on the solicitation of some of the chief men of the court, whom the Caliph could not deny†.

It

* When Hejer came near the place of execution he begged time to wash himself, which he always punctually performed; after which he said two short prayers, and rising up, said, had I been afraid of death, I could have made them longer; but when he saw his grave ready digged, his winding sheet spread out, and the executioner's sword drawn, he was observed to tremble. And being asked, if he had not said that he was not afraid, he answered, how is it possible to be unmoved at such a prospect? The executioner bid him stretch out his neck strait; he answered, he would not be assistant to his own death. Then his head was immediately struck off, his body was washed, and he was buried in his chains, according to his own directions.

Ockley, vol. II. fol. 126, 127.

† Aïsha sent a messenger to intercede for Hejer and the other criminals, but he arrived too late. When Moawiyah afterwards

It seems according to arabian authors, that MOAWIYAH. Hegyra 46. Ch. ær. 666. nothing passed in the 46th and 47th years of the Hegyra more remarkable than the punishment of Hejer, and the poisoning the son of Khaled; for during all that time, and even for great part of the year 48, they relate nothing worthy observation, either in Hegyra 48. Ch. ær. 668. respect to the general history of the Arabians, or to the Caliph in particular.

They had however surely ample materials The Mussulmen besiege Constantinople in vain. to have worked upon, in giving an account of the preparations which Moawiyah made for the siege of Constantinople, to which city he sent a numerous fleet towards the end of the year 48. One would think that an armament of such a kind would have been much more worthy the attention and inquiries of historians, than a number of insignificant things with which they have filled their works.

We therefore only know in general, that Moawiyah, who had formed a design of raising a fleet even whilst he was only governor of Syria, had vigorously endeavoured to carry that design into execution, so soon as he attained the Caliphate. When he thought himself in a condition of keeping the sea, he equipped a fleet, which he sent

afterwards visited Aïesha at Medina, she said to him from behind the curtain, what was become of your compassion when you killed Hejer and his companions? I lose that, mother, said he, when I am absent from such persons as you.

to

MOAWIYAH. to Constantinople under the command of his
 Hegyra 48. son Yezid.
 Ch. ær. 668.

Death of
 Abu Jiub.

They laid siege to the city, which was of long duration, and unsuccessful; and these are the only important particulars that authors have thought fit to relate of it. Instead of giving us a circumstantial account of so important an enterprize, and which was so long carried on as to have produced many great and important actions and events, they have been very particular in informing us, that three of the companions of Mahomet, notwithstanding their great age, went on that hazardous expedition; that the army suffered extreme hardships in their march, but were encouraged by a tradition, no less than a plenary indulgence; Mahomet having said, “The sins of the first army that takes the city of Cæsar* are forgiven.” That a famous mussulman captain (one of the companions and who was present with Mahomet at the battles of Bedre and Ohod) named Abu Jiub, was killed during the siege, and buried near the walls of the place †.

Hegyra 49.
 Ch. ær. 669.

Expedition of
 Yezid.

The author who gives the most circumstantial account of the attempt upon Constantinople, relates, that Yezid at the head of a strong army in a very short time took

* Jerusalem was then called the city of Cæsar.

† A mosque has been since raised over his tomb, which is held in such veneration by the turks, that to this very day the emperors of the Ottoman family go thither with great ceremony to have their swords girt on upon their accession to the throne.

away from the grecian emperor, Armenia and Natolia. He then passed the Hellespont, and laid siege to Constantinople, and that the Greeks took no care to prevent his approaches. That they contented themselves with appearing in a posture of defence upon the ramparts, and quietly suffered the Arabians to post and cover themselves in the neighbourhood of the city, the circumference and extent of which was so immense, that the mussulman troops could not compleatly invest it. That notwithstanding this disadvantage, the Grecians in no wise disturbed their tranquillity; and that the Saracens plowed and sowed the fields adjacent to the town and suburbs, and gathered in the harvest with the same facility they could have done in their own country. And that after having thus passed two years, they formed several attacks, in which they lost a great number of men, and finally raised the siege.

MOAWIYAH
Hegyra 49.
Ch. ær. 669.

During the time of that enterprize, great disturbances arose in Africa, the inhabitants whereof seemed inclined to throw off the mussulman yoke. They had submitted only through fear, and so soon as they found themselves at liberty, they returned to their old religion; but on the appearance of the saracen troops they again professed Mussulmanism.

Inconstancy
of the Afri-
cans.

Moawiyah appointed a man named Okbad, who was a person of great capacity, to be governor of the province of Africa, who at last,

Okbad con-
firms them in
Mahometism.

MOAWIYAH. last, but not without trouble, fixed the in-
 Hegyra 49. constant genius of that people. After having
 Ch. ær. 669. fruitlessly used all the methods mercy and
 moderation could suggest, he resolved to
 make use of severity, and thereby gained his
 point. He caused a register to be kept of
 the names of all those who were the chief pro-
 moters of the changes in religion which so
 frequently happened in that province, and
 gave orders that they should be all put to the
 edge of the sword: and he at the same time
 issued a proclamation, importing, that for
 the future he would act with the same vigour
 against all such as should dare to abandon the
 religion of the prophet.

Hegyra 50. *
 Ch. ær. 670.

He builds the
 city of Kair-
 wan.

The fears of death made a strong impres-
 sion on the inhabitants of that country, but
 the better to prevent the ill effects of their
 inconstancy, and keep them in awe, he caused
 the city of Kairwan † to be built, which
 city afterwards became the capital of the
 province of Africa (properly so called.) For

* In the 50th year of the Hegyra died Mogeirah-ebn Saïd governor of Cufah. The plague had raged there, on which he retired, and the pestilence ceasing, he returned and died of it.— He was an active man, and of good parts. He lost an eye at the battle of Yermouk, or, as some say, by looking at an eclipse. He was accounted to be of the wrong party, and a chief of them. They reckon five elders on Ali's side; Mahomet, Ali, Fatima, Hassan, Hossein. Their opposites are, Abubecre, Omar, Moawiyah, Amru, and Mogeirah. This year also died Rahya, one of the earliest professors of Mahometism. Mahomet said, that of all men he ever saw, Rahya did most resemble the angel Gabriel.

† It was distanced from Carthage towards the north east thirty-three leagues, and twelve from the sea.

this

this purpose he chose a country very woody, and full of serpents and wild beasts, which had often done great mischief: besides, the woods had served as an asylum to the rebels during the time of their revolt; and the governor had been greatly retarded and perplexed in his march, when he pursued them. He therefore caused all the trees in the neighbourhood to be felled, and they proved of singular use to him in building the new city. There he fixed his residence, and it became the center of his jurisdiction, and it was soon considerable on account of its commerce, the number of its inhabitants, and the reputation it gained when the sciences flourished there.

MOAWIYAH.
Hegyra 50.
Chr. ær. 670.

The Saracens also made use of it as a place of arms; there they deposited their riches, and also the booty they took from their enemies. And as it was remote from the sea, and bordering upon the desert, they were secure from the invasions of the grecian or roman navies; and indeed the governor had taken such precaution in fortifying both the coast and the avenues to the city, that no descent could have been made there with any prospect of success.

Whilst Okbad was establishing the government of Moawiyah in Africa, the famous Ziyad was employed in subduing the Alians in the several places committed to his charge. After having forced the Irakians to return to their duty and submit to the Caliph, he

Ziyad asks for
the govern-
ment of Ara-
bia.

MOAWIYAH.
Hegyra 50.
Chr. ær. 670.

wrote a letter to him, to ask for the government of Arabia. The manner in which he expressed himself in his letter, plainly shews, that Irak was so well secured that there was no reason to fear any future disturbances, and that he could with the same facility secure the peace and tranquillity of the rest of Arabia. “ My left hand, said he to the Caliph, is here employed in governing the people of Irak : in the mean time my right hand remains idle. Give it Arabia to govern, and it will give you a good account of it.”

He dies in
going to take
possession of it.

Moawiyah, who was sensible of how much importance it was to him, to employ a man so capable of doing him service, immediately granted his request. The news of it being soon spread abroad, was not very pleasing to all that heard it. Amongst others, this nomination greatly alarmed the inhabitants of Medina, who were afraid of his rough and violent temper. One of them, named Abdollah-ebn-Zobeir, alluding to the expressions made use of by Ziyad in his letter to the Caliph, publickly uttered this prayer : “ O God ! satisfy this right hand which is idle and superfluous to Ziyad*.” It is said that soon after this prayer Ziyad was seized with a pestilential ulcer in one of the fingers of his right hand, and that he died of it, as he

Hegyra 53.
Chr. ær. 672.

* There is in these words an elegant allusion to the name of Ziyad, which signifies in Arabic, abundant and superfluous.

was on the road going to to take possession of his government. Authors fix his death in the 53d year of the Hegyra, and the 672d of the Christian æra.

MOAWIYAH.

Hegyra 53.

Chr. ær. 672.

The same year died the famous Giabalah-ebn-Aihan, the last king of the tribe of Gassan, who were arabian christians. He embraced Mussulmanism in the Caliphate of Omar; but quitted it on account of some differences he had with that Caliph, and remained amongst the Christians till his death.

Death of Giabalah.

Moawiyah was sensibly touched at the loss of Ziyad: He was indebted to him for the establishment of his authority in all the provinces of the mussulman empire; and if any malcontents still remained, they dared not shew their heads.

Hegyra 54.

Chr. ær. 673.

The Caliph finding himself in peaceable possession of his dignity, fixed his residence at Damascus. He thought this city was worthy of being chosen as the capital, as it had gained the admiration of all mankind, on account of its pleasant situation, its extent, the magnificence of its buildings, and the mildness and goodness of its climate.

He fixes the seat of his empire at Damascus.

In order to render the city venerable to the Mussulmen in particular, he resolved that the very pulpit from which Mahomet had propagated Islamism, should be brought thither. He hoped that by erecting so precious a relick of Mahometism in the mosque of Damascus, and ascending it himself, to perform the public service, the people, struck

He proposes to bring thither Mahomet's pulpit.

MOAWIYAH. at the sight of it, would have a stronger attachment to his person, and pay a greater regard to his dignity.
 Hegyra 54.
 Chr. ær. 673.

He therefore sent to Medina, and commanded that the pulpit of the prophet should be forthwith sent to him. The Medinians, alarmed at the Caliph's design, entreated that they would not deprive them of a treasure which was the only thing they had to comfort them, since it was determined their city should be no longer honoured with the presence of their sovereign, as it had been ever since the days of the apostle of God.

The Medinians oppose it. But their remonstrances were ineffectual, and the order imported that the pulpit should be brought away even by force, if need required. They therefore prepared to execute the Caliph's commands notwithstanding the opposition of the Medinians, when there immediately happened an eclipse of the sun, which they all looked on as a prodigy, and as a manifest indication of the divine displeasure, for their presuming to lay hands on the apostle's pulpit : and the messengers of Moawiyah, terrified at an event, which they superstitiously concluded to be a miracle, desisted from their enterprize. They therefore informed the Caliph of what had happened, and received orders to leave the relick in the place where the prophet himself had set it.

Moawiyah gives the government of Medina to Merwan. In this year Moawiyah deprived Saëd of the government of Medina, and restored it to Merwân-ebn-Hakem, the former possessor.

But

But authors do not say what was the cause of this change. The Caliph also commanded Merwân to demolish Saëd's house, and seize all his effects in Hejaz. The new governor acquainted Saëd with the purport of his orders, and told him he could by no means avoid putting them in execution: He even remonstrated to Saëd, that if he had been in his (Merwân's) place, he would have done the like, a governor being obliged to obey the commands of his sovereign.

MOAWIYAH.

Hegyra 54.

Chr. ær. 673.

He was much surprized when Saëd informed him that he had received orders from the Caliph at the time he himself was governor, to treat Merwân in like manner, but in regard to the friendship that had so long subsisted between them, he had ventured to disobey. In a word, he produced the Caliph's letter, and told Merwân he had rather chosen to risque the Caliph's displeasure, than feel the pain he must have suffered in ruining his friend. Merwân readily acknowledged Saëd's superior generosity, imitated him in his conduct, and gave over all thoughts of executing the Caliph's order. They both easily perceived that this was an artful contrivance of Moawiyah to set them at variance, lest their union should prove prejudicial to his authority. Merwân wrote to Moawiyah on this account, and he being not a little ashamed at his own ungenerous dealing, revoked the unjust command, approved of

MOAWIYAH. their conduct, and assured them they might
 Hegyra 54. depend on his friendship.
 Chr. ær. 673.

Obeidollah
 made gover-
 nor of Chora-
 san.

The same year the Caliph gave the govern-
 ment of the province of Chorasan to Obei-
 dollah, the son of Ziyad, who was then but
 20 * years old. This extraordinary favour
 was bestowed on him for his behaviour when
 upon the death of his father he came to pay
 his duty to Moawiyah, and to give an ac-
 count of what had passed in the several pro-
 vinces of which Ziyad had lately been go-
 vernor. That young Mussulman spoke with
 so much good sense and judgment, and gave
 so satisfactory an account of the dispositions,
 character, zeal and conduct of his father's
 deputies, that the Caliph, amazed to find so
 much merit in so young a man, readily
 placed his whole confidence in him, and set
 him over a considerable province. †

He defeats the
 Turks.

Moawiyah had not the least cause to repent
 the choice he had made. Obeidollah soon
 gained the affections of the people committed
 to his charge; and they boldly marched un-
 der his command, when he had formed a
 design of attacking the enemies of the state.
 He passed the river Gihon, otherwise called

* Ockley says, 25 years.

† This year Moawiyah deposed Samrah, who was Zi-
 yad's deputy over Basorah. When Samrah heard the
 news, he said, "God curse Moawiyah: If I had served
 God so well as I have served him, he would never have
 damned me to all eternity." This much resembles the speech
 made by Cardinal Wolfey when he was seized by order
 of Henry the Eighth. Perhaps the Cardinal was indebted
 to this Arabian for the thought.

the

the Oxus, and advanced as far as the mountains of Bochara. There he encountered the Turks, and giving them battle, he beat them, and put their forces so totally to the rout, that their queen, who was in the action, lost one of her buskins in the flight, which made the fortune of him that found it; for it was so richly ornamented, that it was valued at two thousand pieces of gold.

MOAWIYAH.
Hegyra 54.
Chr. ær. 673.

Obeidallah was preparing to push his conquests with the utmost vigour, when he was recalled by the Caliph, who had taken a resolution of sending him to Basorah to replace Abdallah the son of Amru, whom he was forced to deprive of that government, on account of a commotion which happened in that city. One day as Abdallah was preaching in the mosque, a leading man of one of the tribes of the Arabians threw dust at him. The governor, enraged at so gross an insult, caused the Mussulman who had offended to be forthwith seized, and following Ziyad's example on a like occasion, he ordered his hand to be cut off, which was executed on the spot.

Hegyra 55.
Chr. ær. 674.
Obeidallah is recalled from his government, and the reason why.

Some of the leading men in Basorah, and in particular the chiefs of the tribes, who were the governor's enemies, went to Moawiyah, and loudly complained of Abdallah's cruelty, who had so basely treated one of the chief inhabitants of the city, without any proof of the insult he pretended to have re-

MOAWIYAH. received *. And they entreated the Caliph
 Hegyra 55. to execute the law of retaliation upon the
 Chr. ær. 674. governor.

The Caliph, amazed at the warmth and eagerness with which the Basorians prosecuted Abdallah, strove to appease them by promising to punish him; he gave them to understand they could have no retaliation against his deputy, but he would fine him. It soon appeared that this judgment was given only to please the Basorians; for Moawiyah privately gave order that Abdallah should pay no part of the fine, and it was actually issued from the public treasury.

The heat with which this affair was carried on, plainly convinced Moawiyah to how great a degree the Basorians were disgusted with their governor. He foresaw it would be impossible to continue him in his post, without exposing him to fresh insults. He resolved therefore to recall him, and substituted in his room Obeidollah, the son of Ziyad, who left Chorasán to the care of one Aslam, a worthless man, and very unfit for an employment of so much importance. He was soon dismissed, and Moawiyah appointed Saëd, the Caliph Othman's grandson, lieu-

* Upon being applied to by the chief of the tribe, they told him Moawiyah would deal by him and his, as he had dealt with Hejer and his companions; wherefore, added they, give it under your hand that you did the action indiscreetly, which he foolishly complied with, in hopes of pacifying them; and the messengers produced it to Moawiyah in support of their charge against him.

tenant in his stead. In this place he gained as great a reputation as Obeidollah had already acquired there, by adding new provinces to those of which the Mussulmen were already in possession *.

MOAWIYAH.

Hegyra 55.

Chr. ær. 674.

Hitherto the government had been elective, but the great success which had attended Moawiyah in all his undertakings, from the time of his elevation to the Caliphate, had inspired him with a design of rendering that dignity hereditary in his family. He had been long ruminating on this project, and at last resolved to put it in execution, and to oblige the people to declare his son Yezid his heir and successor. For this purpose he wrote circular letters to all the provinces; the Syrians and Irakians came in to the Caliph's design, and Yezid was proclaimed by them without the least opposition.

Hegyra 56.

Chr. ær. 675.

Moawiyah

procures his

son to be ac-

knowledged

his successor.

But it was not so at Medina. Malek, who was then governor of that city, having attempted to cause Yezid to be proclaimed there, as presumptive heir to the Caliphate, was strongly opposed by the major part of the inhabitants, who were headed by Houssein the son of Ali, Abdallah-ebn-Amer, Abdarrahan, the son of Abubecre, and brother of Aïesha, and Abdallah the son of Zobeir; who unanimously declared they would

* Saëd passed the river Gihon, formerly Oxus, went to Samarcand (afterwards the capital of the great Tamerlane) and Sogd. Having there routed the idolaters, he went to Tarmud, which surrendered to him.

MOAWIYAH. never suffer a dignity to be rendered hereditary, which had been always elective amongst the Mussulmen. They represented to him that the crown ought to be given by the votes of the people alone ; and that it ought always to be conferred on the most worthy, agreeable to the intention of the prophet and his successors, who had never appointed, or so much as named a person to reign after them.

Hegyra 56.

Chr. ær. 675.

The Caliph having been soon informed of what passed at Medina, in hopes of encouraging the matter by his presence, went thither in person, attended by a thousand horse, and had a long conference with Aïesha on that subject. We are not told the particulars of what passed there ; but the result was, that the inhabitants of Hejaz publicly acknowledged Yezid as heir to the Caliphate.

Moawiyah having thus succeeded in drawing off the people from their chiefs of the opposite faction, attempted to bring over the heads themselves. He ascended the pulpit in the mosque, and having read the prayers, he made a very pathetic speech, to convince them how necessary it was, for the sake of the public tranquillity, that such as had opposed Yezid's election, should comply with the opinion of those who had submitted to it. He employed his utmost efforts to make them unanimous, but all in vain ; for, spight of all his remonstrances and threats, the adherents stood their ground,

and

and shewed by their resolute answers that they despised his menaces.

MOAWIYAH.
Hegyra 57.
Chr. ær. 676.

Though Moawiyah was vehemently enraged, and had a force at hand, he dared not offer any violence to the opponents; they were very considerable amongst the people, and even amongst those of a contrary opinion; so that the Caliph did not think it prudent to make use of compulsion.

After this, Moawiyah gave his advice to Yezid touching his conduct when he should be placed on the throne, and told him what he had to fear from the chiefs of the opposite faction. “Hossein, said he, has a strong party, consisting of his own family, and many amongst the Irakians; they will continually urge him to make war against you, and perhaps he will comply; but it will be rather from notions of honour, than through ambition: Therefore if by the fortune of war he comes under your power, remember he is your relation; consider he is a person of singular merit, and set him at liberty without the least hesitation. As to Abdallah, the son of Amer, I think you have little to fear from him; he is too much given up to devotion to think of engaging in plots and conspiracies. With regard to Abdarrahan, I think, (but for a contrary reason) he will not prove a more formidable enemy: He is so guided by the opinion of others, and so totally addicted to women and play, that it is very improbable he should enter
into

Moawiyah informs Yezid of the characters of the chief of the opponents.

MOAWIYAH. into any cabal. But Abdallah-ebn-Zobeir
 Hegyra 57. is the man you ought most to fear ; he is of
 Chr. ær. 676. an enterprizing genius, and capable of any
 undertaking ; he will attack you with the
 strength of the lion, and the subtilty of the
 fox : death alone can free you from such
 an enemy : therefore if ever he falls into your
 hands, cut him in pieces.”

Moawiyah was highly pleased that he had
 carried his grand point, and that an innova-
 tion of so great importance as the appoint-
 ing a successor to the crown in his life-time,
 had caused no greater disturbances than those
 already mentioned. He thought his son was
 fit to reign, but the opinion he entertained
 of his merit was without foundation. View-
 ing him with a father's eye, he spied in him
 a thousand perfections ; but paternal love
 made him blind to all his faults.

What retarded
 Moawiyah's
 design of caus-
 ing his son to
 be acknow-
 ledged his suc-
 cessor.

Yezid was a profligate young man, wholly
 given up to sporting, gaming and drinking.
 The famous Ziyad knew him well ; and
 having been consulted by Moawiyah at the
 time that Caliph was revolving in his mind
 the design of transmitting the crown to his
 son, he did all in his power to divert his sove-
 reign from executing the project. Ziyad
 only objected how dangerous it would be to
 alter the fundamental constitution of the state.
 As to Yezid's fitness and merit, he was cau-
 tious of being too explicit to a father ; how-
 ever it appeared from what he said, that he
 did not think Yezid would answer the Ca-
 liph's

lip's expectations, or that the choice would do honour either to the throne or the nation. MoAWIYAH.
Hegyra 57.
Chr. ær. 676.

Moawiyah was staggered by these remonstrances, and for some years laid his project aside : but upon Ziyad's death, who was the only man that had taken the liberty of speaking to him touching his son's disposition and qualifications, he resumed the design ; however two years passed after his return to Damascus, before he suffered him to perform the functions of the Caliphate.

In this interval historians make little mention of the Arabian empire ; they only relate the death of the famous Aiesha, who ended her days at Medina, and who during her life time had been treated with the utmost respect by the Mussulmen *. The same year also died her brother Abdarrahan, who was one of the four that opposed Yezid's inauguration. Hegyra 58.
Chr. ær. 677.
Death of Aiesha and Abdarrahan.

The next year died Abu-Hureirah, who had been one of Mahomet's chief confidants. Death of Abu-Hureirah.

The true name or pedigree of that Mussulman is not known, that which is above mentioned being a nick-name, signifying father of the cat, which was given him by Mahomet, on account of his fondness for one of those animals, which he always carried about with him. Hegyra 59.
Chr. ær. 678.

* We must except the time when she exposed herself in the expedition against Ali, as before related. At other times she was called prophetess ; and when any person spoke to her, it was generally by the title of Mother of the Faithful.

MOAWIYAH.

Hegyra 60.

Chr. ær. 679.

Ceremony of
the inaugu-
ration of Ye-
zid.

The 60th year of the Hegyra was remarkable for the inauguration of Yezid. He was publicly acknowledged as his father's colleague, and took his seat as presumptive heir to the Caliphate. The ceremony was performed with great pomp and solemnity, and the young prince received the compliments and allegiance of all the provinces of the empire from their respective ambassadors.

Blind fondness
of Moawiyah
for Yezid.

Amongst the rest came Al-Ahnaph, a venerable old man, Yezid's uncle. He abode some time at the Caliph's court, and the fond father being desirous that all the world should join with him in entertaining a good opinion of his son's capacity, desired Al-Ahnaph to discourse him; and to give him a fair opportunity of trying his parts, he left them some time alone, with an injunction to tell him sincerely what he thought of Yezid.

This was a very troublesome task to Al-Ahnaph; he was not at all pleased with his nephew's capacity and character, and was consequently very unwilling plainly to speak his sentiments to his brother. He avoided it as long as he could, but when he was on the point of leaving Damascus, Moawiyah reminded him of the injunction. The old man gravely and honestly answered: "If we lye, we are afraid of God; and if we speak truth, we are afraid of you: you know best both his night and his day; his inside and his outside, his coming in and his going out: it is our business

ness to hear and obey : yours to give Iscneuo to the people".

MOAWIYAH-
Hegyra 60.
Chr. ær. 679.

This was enough to have opened the Caliph's eyes, as to the supposed merit of his son ; but that able clear-sighted man, so famous among his countrymen for his great discernment, blinded by paternal fondness, entertained too favourable an opinion of him, which could by no means be eradicated. Though otherwise a prudent man, he could not help frequently commending his son for his majestic look, and expressing in conversation the great opinion he had of his abilities for governing a potent empire. But unhappily for him, as well as for the nation, he was the only person of that opinion.

It is related that in one of his harangues to the people (after the public prayers) he thus addressed himself to the Deity : " O God ! If thou knowest that I have settled the government upon my son, because according to the best of my judgment I think him qualified for it, confirm it to him. But if I have done it out of affection, confirm it not. "

Moawiyah began at that time insensibly to decline ; he was advanced in years, and the fatigues of war, and those he had otherwise sustained in order to gratify his ambition, had greatly weakened his constitution. The last speech he made in public, was to this effect : " I am like the corn that is to be reaped. I have governed you a long time,

MOAWIYAH. time, till we are weary of each other ; both
 Hegyra 60. willing to part. I am superior to all those
 Ch. ar. 679. that shall come after me, as my predecessors
 were superior to me. Whosoever loves
 to meet God, God loves to meet him. O
 God ! I love to meet thee, do thou love to
 meet me ! ”

Moawiyah's
 last advice to
 Yezid.

Shortly after this he was seized with a
 fainting fit, and was sensible his end was
 approaching. His son being then absent, he
 called to him the captain of his guards, and
 another of his chief officers, and said to
 them : Remember me to Yezid, and tell
 him this from me : “ Look upon the Ara-
 bians as your stock and foundation, and
 when they send any ambassadors to you,
 treat them with courtesy and respect. Take
 care of the Syrians, they are firmly in your
 interest, to them you are indebted for the
 inheritance I leave you, and you may depend
 upon them whenever you are attacked by
 your enemies : but if you have occasion to
 employ them out of their own country, send
 them home again so soon as they have done
 their business, for they become worse by
 staying long abroad. Should the Irakians
 demand a new governor every day, oblige
 them, for you had better in such case part
 with your dearest friend, than have an hun-
 dred thousand swords drawn against you. If
 Abdallah the son of Zobeir attacks you, op-
 pose him ; if he offers you peace, accept it,
 and

and be as sparing as possible of the blood of your subjects.”

MOAWIYAH.

Hegyra 60.

Ch. ær. 679.

Death of
Moawiyah.

Moawiyah died in the twentieth year of his reign, and about the seventy fifth year of his age. When he was dead, Dehac the son of Kais assembled the people in the mosque, and mounting the pulpit with Moawiyah's winding sheet, he shewed it to the people to satisfy them of his death: he then made an encomium upon him, and said the burial prayer over him.

Such was the end of Moawiyah, a prince in great repute amongst the Mussulmen, on account of the many eminent posts he possessed. Having been secretary to Mahomet, he was appointed governor of Syria, which he held four years under the Caliph Omar, and in which he was continued by Othman during the whole course of his reign, which was about twelve years; and four years more he kept Syria in his own hands by force, during his dispute with Ali. So that the time of his government, and of his reign, was about forty years.

His character.

He was of a merciful disposition, and courageous: he was easy of access, and all such as had any affairs to transact with him, could not help commending his polite and affable behaviour. He was of a quick capacity, thoroughly skilled in the administration of government, and master of admirable sagacity in discerning the characters and merit of men. In respect to his son indeed, he

MOAWIYAH. either did not, or would not know his true
 Hegyra 60. character.
 Ch. ar. 679.

Authors speak highly in praise of the noble generosity of this Caliph. They tell us that when he received visits from persons of high rank and quality, he usually invited them to take any thing of value, or curious, belonging to him, that they had a mind to *.

The strict Mussulmen were not a little offended at the richness of his dress; for till his time the Caliphs had worn only woollen garments. But so soon as he became governor of Syria, he began to make use of silk, and ever afterwards was cloathed in rich and costly array. He also lived in a very splendid manner, and made no scruple of constantly drinking wine, contrary to the usage of his predecessors, who had always looked upon that liquor to be absolutely prohibited.

This great prince set himself above all the laws in order to attain the sovereign dignity; he gained it without being indebted to an election, or the suffrages of the nation; by the help of Amru he took such prudent measures that he assumed the title of Caliph by the sole assistance and countenance of the votes of the Syrians, spight of the nomina-

* He made a present to Aïsha of a bracelet worth 100,000 pieces of gold. He presented Hassan with 300,000 pieces. To Abdallah the son of Zobeir he gave 100,000. To Hossein 100,000. The like to Abdollah-ben-Jaafar. To Merwân the son of Hakem, afterwards Caliph, 100,000. At another time he presented Hassan with four millions.

tion

tion of Haffan, whom the Arabians had raised to the throne. And he so managed his rival as to cause him to abdicate in his favour. His policy, being happily seconded by fortune, raised him to that amazing heighth, in which he fixed and maintained himself, by the help of great skill and talents.

MOAWIYAH.
Hegyra 60.
Ch. ær. 679.

He may have been reproached, as an usurper ; but it must at the same time be confessed, that he was a great monarch, and at least as worthy the empire as any of those who possessed it before him. He was so fortunate as to extend the limits of his dominions, and was the first who transmitted the crown to his posterity. To him also the Saracens owed the establishment of the posts, and the raising a fleet, useful and noble improvements, which shewed the greatness of his capacity, and the extent of his genius.

This Caliph was not learned, but he had a natural taste, which supplied his want of skill and knowledge in the arts and sciences ; and that taste induced him to esteem and favour such as excelled therein. He had above all a singular affection for poets, and gave them proofs of it upon every occasion that offered. Arabian authors relate (amongst others) two passages, which it may not be improper to mention.

Inclination of
Moawiyah to
poetry.

An arabian robber being once condemned to have his hand cut off, was brought before Moawiyah, in order that the sentence might be confirmed. The criminal being in the

MOAWIYAH. Caliph's presence, and reflecting on his great love for poetry, made and repeated four verses on the spot, which were very ingenious and beautiful; and Moawiyah was so highly pleased with them, that he forthwith pardoned the Arabian, and caused him to be set at liberty.

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This pardon raised the greater admiration, as it was the first sentence pronounced by a magistrate amongst the Mussulmen, that had not been put in execution: for till the time of Moawiyah, the Caliphs had not presumed to shew favour to those whom the ordinary judges had condemned.

The great fondness which Moawiyah had for poetry, was also of great use to a young Arabian in obtaining speedy redress for a crying injury done him by the governor of Cufah, in forcibly taking from him his beauteous and beloved wife. The wretched husband came to make his complaint to the Caliph, and expressed his present condition in so moving an elegy, that Moawiyah both moved and delighted with the bold and pathetic expressions, and lively fancy of the young poet, put off the determination of all other business, in order to do him speedy justice. He sent an express to the governor, and commanded him to resign the woman without delay: and in the mean time he kept the husband at court, and treated him with great marks of respect.

The

The governor returned a very extraordinary answer, which shewed the excess of his passion. He informed the messenger that if the Caliph would permit him to retain her only twelve months, he would consent to have his head cut off at the end of that time: but the Caliph rigidly insisted on her being given up, and she was brought before him.

MOAWIYAH.
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So extraordinary an event excited the Caliph's curiosity. He was desirous of seeing a woman whose beauty was so much talked of: on the sight of her he found that fame had been far from over-rating her perfections, and that her charms were capable of inspiring each beholder with love. But when she spoke, with her usual politeness and elegance of expression, he declared that he who had received so many embassies, and conversed with the greatest men of his country, never before heard such a torrent of eloquence as flowed from the lips of that charming Arabian.

Moawiyah, in a transport of admiration, imagined he saw one of those divine women whom Mahomet has placed in his paradise, to administer to the pleasures of the blessed. He was never tired of listening to her, and continually asked her new questions, that he might give her an opportunity of speaking. After a pretty long conversation, the Caliph asked her, (having purposely assumed a serious air) for which she had the greatest affection, the governor or her husband? the fair

MOAWIYAH. arabian remaining some time silent, Moawiyah thought he had put her to a stand, and was beginning to grow angry, when she, with a modesty becoming her sex, answered him in verse, full of fire and spirit, in which she shewed her great love and attachment to her husband, and begged she might be restored to him. “What a prodigy of wit and beauty you are! cried the Caliph in amaze; how highly would my kingdom be honoured, if you would be pleased to share my throne! but since you are resolved to return to your own country, I will not prevent you: go then, and if you would enjoy your happy husband without fear of some fresh misfortune, keep close to your house: and if you must go out, let a thick veil cover your matchless charms from the eyes of men.”

The Caliph dismissed the happy pair, to each of whom he gave the strongest proof of his esteem and regard. He made them very rich presents; and as the young Arabian had informed Moawiyah, that in endeavouring to recover his wife, he had shattered his fortune, the Caliph made it up to him by bestowing on him double the sum he had expended for that purpose. The young poet and his fair wife returned to Arabia, where they shewed their gratitude to Moawiyah, in publickly acknowledging the goodness and generosity of that Caliph, who had bestowed on them so many favours.

Shortly

Shortly after this event Moawiyah died. MOAWIYAH.
 The city of Damascus, which had been the Hegyra 60.
 place of his residence, was the place of his Ch. ær. 679.
 sepulchre, and there also were buried all the
 Caliphs of the dynasty of the Ommiyans.

Y E Z I D.

The SEVENTH CALIPH.

YEZID, the son of Moawiyah, was YEZID.
 in the thirtieth year of his age when he Hegyra 60.
 ascended the throne. He was forthwith ac- Ch. ær. 679.
 knowledged lawful Caliph in all the Maho- The people of
 metan countries, except the cities of Mecca Mecca and
 and Medina, the inhabitants whereof being Medina re-
 enraged at the slight Moawiyah shewed them, fuse to ac-
 by disregarding their right to votes in the knowledge
 nomination of a sovereign, they resolved to Yezid.
 revenge the contempt of the father on the
 son, and to use their utmost efforts to recover
 their liberties and priviledges.

They might possibly have succeeded in Hossein and
 their attempts, had it not been for the factions Abdallah
 that divided them as to the Caliphate. form preten-
 Hossein the son of Ali, laid claim to it as his sions to the
 birth-right. And Abdallah the son of Zobeir Caliphate.
 had also his views and pretensions; and they
 were each of them supported by a strong
 party, which kept up their hopes. The
 least disturbance would have given them an
 opportunity of breaking out into an open
 K 4 revolt;

YEZID.
Hegyra 60.
Ch. ær, 679.

revolt; but though Yezid was very indifferently provided with those talents which are necessary for the ruling a kingdom, he behaved so prudently as to maintain the quiet of the state.

The new Caliph did not remove one of the lieutenants and officers, which his father had set over the provinces. On the contrary he wrote to them, and confirmed them in their posts, informing them at the same time of the right he had to the sovereign dignity, as being then solely possessed of it by the death of Moawiyah.

Yezid having been informed, that he had no reason to fear any opposition, save only from Houssein the son of Ali, and Abdallah the son of Zobeir, he particularly mentioned those two Mussulmen in a letter he wrote to Waled the son of Otbah, then governor of Medina; and he commanded him to use his utmost endeavour to make them pay their homage without delay.

As there appeared no small danger in executing such a commission relating to persons of so considerable credit and power, Waled went to Merwân-ebn-Hakem and consulted him concerning the contents of it. Merwân was a person of note, whom Moawiyah had made use of on several occasions. We are not told why the Caliph shewed so little gratitude to him; but after he was appointed governor of Medina, he was dismissed, as we have already observed, and Saëd put in
his

his place; Moawiyah afterwards restored that government to him, and again deprived him of it in favour of Waled. YEZID.
Hegyra 60.
Ch. ær. 679.

This new governor therefore went to consult Merwân, who was of opinion that they should send for Houssein and Abdallah, and that they should not mention Moawiyah's death, till they had inquired and discovered their sentiments touching Yezid's right to the Caliphate, a dignity in which he had been installed by his father, with the consent of the major part of the Mussulmen. He added, that the oath of allegiance should be then forthwith tendered to them, and if they refused to take it, their heads should be struck off.

In conformity to this advice, Waled sent a message to Houssein and Abdallah, desiring them to attend him. They answered the messenger that they would come. But as they probably had some suspicion of Moawiyah's death, they suspected what would be required of them, and took their measures accordingly.

Houssein appeared the first at the governor's house. He had taken the precaution to be attended with a large body of his friends, whom he placed about the door, with orders to come in if they should hear any disturbance. But this precaution became unnecessary by the manner in which he answered what Waled required of him. The governor having acquainted him with Moawiyah's death, invited him to own his allegiance They refuse
to take the
oath to Yezid.

YEZID.

Hegyra 60.

Ch. ær. 679.

ance to Yezid. Houssein did not absolutely refuse so to do, but answered, that it was not suitable to the dignity of Yezid that the homage due to him, particularly from a man of his distinction, should be paid in private; for considering the present situation of mens minds, such homage might be one day disputed: that therefore he considered it as an act of great importance, which ought to be performed in a solemn assembly of the people, which would render it more authentic.

Waled, imagining that Houssein spoke his real sentiments, declared himself to be of the same opinion, and firmly believing he meant to take the oath in a public assembly, he pressed him no further. Houssein took his leave of the governor in order to depart. But Merwân, who readily saw through this pretence*, said to Waled, "If Houssein does not pay his allegiance before he goes away, I foresee there will be a great deal of blood shed between you and him; let him therefore take the oath forthwith, otherwise strike off his head." Houssein having heard what Merwân said, reproached him for his sanguinary council, and leaping suddenly out of the room, went to his own house. Merwân, finding he was gone, told Waled he was in the wrong to miss so fair an opportunity, and

* It is related that Waled saw through the excuse also, but that he declined putting Houssein to death, either from principles of religion, or love to the family of Ali. Ockley, vol. II. fol. 166.

assured him that he would never see Houssein any more; and indeed he soon resolved to go to some place of safety.

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Abdallah the son of Zobeir was then sent for: he delayed time, and amused the governor by doubtful answers; and having speedily formed a resolution, he departed from Medina with all his family, and most valuable effects.

He chose Mecca for the place of his asylum. Thither also Houssein went for refuge, with all his family, except Mahomet Hanifah, the son of Ali, who was consequently brother of Houssein, but not by the same mother.

They retire to
Mecca.

Mahomet Hanifah, who at parting expressed a most tender affection and concern for Houssein, advised him not to venture himself in any of the provinces, till his friends were gathered together in a considerable body, and then he might trust himself with them. And if he was resolved to go into any town he should prefer Mecca, whence he should immediately withdraw into the mountains, if he found the least appearance of any thing to disgust him.

One would think it might have been more advisable for them to retire together, than for the one to wander in the mountains, where he would have run the hazard of wanting necessaries, and being taken by his enemies; but arabian historians relate this fact, without making the least mention of
the

YEZID.
Hegyra 60.
Ch. ær. 679.

the motives (as indeed they have done in many other instances) and therefore we must be satisfied with their relation.

Hoffein, having agreed on proper measures with his brother, tenderly embraced him, and took the road to Mecca, where he arrived without the least accident. But Abdallah had not so quiet and uninterrupted a journey. Amrou the son of Saïd, who was then governor of Mecca, endeavoured to prevent him from entering the city, for which purpose he employed Amer the son of Zobeir, and brother to Abdallah, but at the same time his inveterate enemy, to march out with a detachment against his own brother. Amer readily accepted the command, and went to meet Abdallah. The latter boldly attacked Amer, beat his troops, took him prisoner, and entered triumphant into Mecca, spight of the attempts of the governor, who dared not to carry his resistance any further, on account of the particular regard and great veneration the Meccans shewed to that Mussulman, and which by the late event was considerably augmented.

Though Abdallah seemed to have interest sufficient to carry his point, yet the presence of Hoffein in Mecca eclipsed his glory: the former was loved and respected, but Hoffein was possessed of personal good qualities, which gained him the general love and esteem of the people. Besides, as Fatima his mother was Mahomet's daughter, and consequently he

was

was the prophet's grandson, he was held in the utmost reverence.

YEZID.

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The governor of Mecca, a very able and understanding man, was much embarrassed by the presence of two such troublesome guests. But he was luckily soon extricated from the difficulty by an order he received from the Caliph.

Yezid, having been informed of Waled's remissness in respect of Houssein and Abdallah, removed him from the government of Medina, and gave it to Amrou-ebn-Saïd, who was governor of Mecca. And Amrou accepted it with the greater pleasure, as it furnished him with a reason for departing from a city, where the authority he had gained, and the respect that had been paid him before the arrival of those two Mussulmen, was afterwards greatly diminished.

Amrou is
made go-
vernor of
Medina.

Now though Amrou was firmly in Yezid's interest, yet, he was persuaded that his absence could in no wise prejudice the Caliph's affairs, for as Houssein and Abdallah had severally a strong party, he was in hopes their competition would at most occasion only some little divisions amongst the inhabitants, that the difficulties of coming to a resolution would cause the principal matter to remain long undecided, and that the Caliph would have time to take proper measures for establishing his authority, at the peril of those who were plotting to wrest it from him.

In

YEZID.

Hegyra 60.
Ch. ær. 679.The Irakians
offer the
crown to Hof-
sein.

In the mean time the supposed equilibrium between the two parties proved a mere chimera. Houssein had in fact a great superiority, which was soon apparent from the steps which the people of Irak took in his favour. Upon Houssein all the Irakians had founded their chief hopes, and had ever detested Moawiyah as a tyrant and usurper. So soon as they heard of his death, they made not the least doubt of succeeding in the design they had formed of restoring the family of Ali to the throne.

The Cufians sent a deputation, consisting of the principal inhabitants, to Houssein to prevail on him to embark in their design. "My lord, said the deputies to him, we consider you as lawful heir to the Caliphate. Moawiyah, whom we detest, is dead; come therefore and resume a throne which is your just right, and which that tyrant forcibly deprived you of. We acknowledge you to be our sovereign; make the people of Irak happy by your presence; through our mouths they pay you homage; they intreat you not to abandon them; and if you come amongst them, you will not only meet with a cordial reception, but find men determined to hazard their lives and fortunes in your cause."

Houssein was far from being displeased with this step, and expressed his thanks to the deputies; however he observed to them, that notwithstanding the great assurances they gave

gave him of succeeding in the enterprize, it was the part of a prudent man to use due caution and circumspection in an affair of so great consequence, and attended with so much hazard. He promised them that he would duly weigh their proposal, and take proper measures with the utmost expedition ; but he charged them to recommend it as his advice to the chief of those who had espoused his interest, to behave with great precaution, and to keep the matter a profound secret till it was ripe for execution.

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Hossein having maturely considered this important and difficult enterprize, resolved to send his cousin Muslim, a person he could rely on, into Irak ; and he gave him the necessary instructions to sound the inclinations of the people. “ If you find them,” said he, “ so unanimous in my interest, as they have been represented, and if they are strong enough to make head against such as may appear to oppose them, you may, without further orders, boldly lead them forth.”

Hossein sends
Muslim to
learn the dis-
positions of
the people.

Muslim departed from Mecca, accompanied by two faithful Mahometans, who from their knowledge of the country were qualified to serve him as guides, and by the correspondence they kept up in those parts might be useful to him in the execution of his orders. But he had scarce reached the borders of Irak, when he had the misfortune to lose them both by maladies, which suddenly put an end to their lives.

So

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Hegyra 60.
Ch. ær. 679.

So unprosperous a beginning discouraged Muslim to such a degree, that he was on the point of giving over the undertaking. However at last he recovered his courage and came to Cufah, where he communicated his business privately only to such persons as he knew he could trust. And the matter was so closely and artfully conducted, that they reckoned themselves secure of eighteen thousand Irakians, who were ready to take up arms.

Noman's
speech to the
Cufians.

Though this secret was imparted to many persons, yet it was a long time before it was disclosed, so that Noman the son of Baschir, who was then governor of Cufah, had not the least information of it till the party was almost ready to take the field. The moment he was apprized of the design, he called an assembly of the people in the mosque; and ascending the pulpit sword in hand, harangued them to the effect following: "I find the spirit of division and disorder is again gone forth; and I am informed that the Irakians are about to take up arms in favour of the Alians. I would exhort you in particular to remain quiet spectators of the difference. By such a conduct you will secure your own happiness and mine. But if I find that any amongst you shall interfere, I swear by the living God, and by this sword which I now hold in my hand, I will never pardon them; and I will sooner lose my life, than be wanting in my duty to the Caliph Yezid."

This

This harangue, pronounced at a time when action would have been much more suitable, did not make the desired impression on the hearers. One of the congregation convinced him of it, by telling him that this was a matter which required stirring, but he talked like one of the weak ones. He answered, "That he had rather be one of the weak ones in obedience to God, than one of the strong in rebelling against him;" and saying these words, he came down from the pulpit.

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Hegyra 60.
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Some Cufians being discontented at the governor's conduct, immediately complained against him to Yezid. They informed the Caliph that the design formed by Houssein's party of making an insurrection had been long discovered, and they accused the governor of not taking proper measures on so important an occasion.

The Caliph, who was highly displeased at the negligence and inattention of Noman, forthwith dismissed him, and put in his place Obeidollah, son of the famous Ziyad. He was already governor of Basorah; but they entertained so good an opinion of his abilities, that they thought him equal to the task of governing both the places.

Obeidollah
made go-
vernor of
Cufah in the
place of No-
man.

Obeidollah went to Cufah so soon as he received the Caliph's orders. And as he had taken care to gain intelligence of what steps the Alians were preparing to take, he discovered that Houssein intended soon to make his appearance in that city.

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Ch. ar. 679.

And his intelligence proved true, for Muslim, being well pleased with the success of his negociation, wrote to Houssein to set out immediately, for that nothing now was wanting but his presence.

Conduct of
Obeidollah
for discover-
ing Houssein's
party.

Obeidollah, suspecting what would happen, was minded artfully to sound the dispositions of the Cufians in the present juncture. He kept his design profoundly secret till the moment he set out, and privately caused a report to be spread in Cufah, that Houssein would arrive there such a day. On the evening of that day he rode into the town, so disguised as to make them believe it was Houssein himself, for he wore a garment like his, and a black turban, such as the son of Ali used to wear. As he passed along he found a croud of inhabitants in the way, whom he saluted with great civility; in a word, he played his part so well, that he was taken for Houssein, and he thereby discovered that the Alians had a very considerable party in the place. He received with great seeming cordiality greetings which were meant to Houssein, and many times heard himself saluted by the title of son of the apostle.

But the Cufians were soon undeceived. Obeidollah went to the castle, and shortly afterwards arrived one hundred horse whom he had chosen for his guard. He then discovered himself, and took measures to stifle the sedition in its birth. In order to do it effectually, and with as little noise as possible, he

he resolved to search to the bottom of the intrigue. For this purpose, having been informed Muslim was the principal agent in the affair, he employed one of his officers to gain admittance into the house of that Mussulman, and to bribe some of his servant thereby to find out the secret.

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The officer, who was well qualified for the unravelling an intrigue, prepared to put his master's orders in execution. He made an acquaintance with some of Muslim's family; and as he pretended to be a zealous friend to the Alians, they made no secret to him of what was transacting in favour of Houssein. He discovered that they used to meet in the night time to consult about that important affair; that they kept an exact register of all such as were of the party, and also of the troops and money they were able to raise and contribute. But in order to be the more exactly informed of the particulars, he procured himself to be introduced to Muslim and told him, that being a great friend to the cause in which he was then employed at Cufah, he was come to offer him a supply of three thousand pieces of gold. His name was forthwith inserted in the register, and he was enlisted among the number of Houssein's adherents. From that moment nothing was concealed from him, and he was soon in a condition of giving his master a true and exact account of the forces of the

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Hegyra 60.
Ch. ær. 679.

Alians, of their designs, and even of the very hour they had fixed for the carrying them into execution. When he had gained as much intelligence as was for his purpose, he suddenly disappeared, and went no more to the house of Muslim.

The unexpected absence of this man raised great suspicions in Muslim, who being apprehensive that he should be seized in his own house, left it, and went for shelter to the house of one of the Emirs of Cufah, named Sharik, who was a sincere friend to the Alians. Thither came the chief confidants of Muslim to confer on their design: but as the governor's vigilance and activity proved a great obstacle to the success of it, they resolved to assassinate him, the first time they should meet him without his attendants.

A project is
formed to kill
Obeidollah.

An opportunity soon offered itself; Obeidollah proposed to pay a visit to Sharik, who was then dangerously ill: though his sickness did not prevent him from doing all in his power to advance the interest of Hossein: Sharik having been informed of the hour the governor would come to make the visit, it was settled that they should not miss so fair an opportunity of striking the intended blow. Muslim undertook to perform it, and it was contrived that he should be placed in a corner of the room, and that he should fall on the governor when the sick man called

called for water, which was the signal appointed for that purpose.

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Ch. ær. 679.

Obeidollah came to the house of Sharik at the hour he had fixed, and so soon as his arrival was made known, Muslim went to his post, and so effectually concealed himself that he could not be seen. The governor, who did not entertain the least suspicion, entered the apartment with a Mussulman named Hani, who was secretly attached to Hossein, and who was concerned in the design against Obeidollah. At his house Muslim lodged on his arrival at Cufah, and there he dwelt till he came for shelter to the house of Sharik.

After the governor had discoursed some time with the sick man, the latter called for water. Muslim made a little stir, but had not courage enough to strike the blow. In the mean time, one of the governor's servants, who had attended him thither, observing what passed; suspected some treachery, and having found means to give his master a hint of his suspicions, he prevailed on him to leave the house without delay.

Muslim lets
slip a favourable
opportunity.

Hani waited on the governor to his house, and returning to Sharik's chamber, he found him venting his reproaches on Muslim for his cowardice; and Hani could not help doing the like. "What an opportunity you have missed!" said he to him; "you might this night have been possessed of the castle,

YEZID.
Hegyra 60.
Ch. ær. 679.

and I leave you to judge how great advantage that event would have been to Houssein."

Muslim could not but agree that, considering the situation of Houssein's affairs, his observation was very just; but he excused himself on account of a tradition which, as he had heard, came from the apostle, who said: "The faith is contrary to murder, let not a believer murder a man unawares." The execution of this previous project was so necessary to the success of the main design, that the excuse appeared to be very ill timed. And they were obliged to think of other measures: but the governor on his part was not wanting; he without delay took such steps as were the most likely to put an end to their cabals.

Sharik died three days after Obeidollah's visit, which was the best thing that could have happened to him in that juncture; for the governor had caused such strict enquiry to be made, that he discovered the correspondence Sharik had kept up with the Iraqians, as well as the risk he himself had run, when he made the abovementioned visit.

One of Houssein's party is seized.

Hani having been seized by order of the governor, it was soon known that the design was discovered. It was Obeidollah's first intention to have seized Muslim; but as he could not readily be found, he ordered Hani to be brought before him, concluding that the one would furnish him with the means of easily finding the other.

When

When Hani appeared, the governor asked him what was become of Muslim. Hani at first pretended that he did not know; but having been confronted by one of the governor's attendants who had seen Muslim at his house, and had paid him money for the service of Hossein, Obeidollah in a rage said to him "Tell me this moment where he is."

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"I would not tell you," replied Hani with great arrogance, "though I knew ever so well." This insolent answer so incensed Obeidollah, that, unable to contain himself, he gave him a violent blow with his mace, which broke his nose, and wounded him sorely. Hani in a fury attempted to snatch a sword from one of the guards, but was prevented, and being secured, he was forthwith sent prisoner to the castle, and declared worthy of death.

This event made a great noise amongst Hani's friends in the city. A report being spread that he was murdered, a great number of armed men flocked to the castle, in order to revenge his death on the authors of it: but they were told that Hani was not dead, and that he was only imprisoned by order of the government, on which the croud dispersed.

The governor assembled his Emirs and chief men under him, and went to the prison to examine Hani; when suddenly a great noise was heard on all sides.

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The guard in the castle ran to arms; and news was brought to Obeidollah that a body of men was marching up to the castle with colours flying.

Muslim takes
up arms.

They were headed by Muslim, who, seriously reflecting on what had passed, resolved to declare himself openly, for he found that arms alone could secure him from Obeidollah's vengeance. He therefore mounted his horse, and appearing in the streets of Cufah, gave the signal agreed on to be given when it should be a proper time to begin the insurrection*; upon which he was soon joined by about four thousand men, with whom he marched out of the city (under two colours, the one green, and the other red) in order to surprize the castle. He at the same time dispatched an express to Houssein, entreating him to come and join him without delay.

The governor gave out such prudent orders, and his troops shewed so much courage and firmness, that Muslim was disheartened, and dared not to go on with his enterprize. The conspirators thus checked, Obeidollah sent several persons of note and credit out of the castle, who went amongst the people and dissuaded them from hazarding themselves on such an account.

The rebels
abandon him.

These remonstrances had such an effect that the Cufians in general, terrified at the

* The words were, Ya menfour ommet! O thou that art helped by the people! meaning Houssein.

dangerous situation of those who had taken up arms, left the city, and spread a panick among Muslim's troops. There was even a Mussulman who told that chief of the rebels, that he had best get away, or he would repent of it. He at first despised such language, and expected each moment to be joined by the rest of his party in Cufah, to attack the castle by open force; but how great was his surprize, when he saw the ranks of his soldiers insensibly thinned! all his men deserted him by degrees, and at last he was obliged to go and hide himself in the city, having no more of his adherents than thirty left about him out of the great number that had at first joined him.

YEZID.
Hegyra 60.
Ch. ær. 679

The governor, who was highly pleased to find that the rebels dispersed of themselves, was in no great haste to seize Muslim; he suffered him to take refuge in the city, but he intended speedily to punish him for his rebellion: and he took no other step than the promising a reward to any person that should discover the traitor.

Muslim, having re-entered Cufah, and finding very few friends in the city, concealed himself during the rest of the day; about the twilight of the evening he departed without a guide, or any other person to assist or comfort him, so fearful was he of trusting any one of those people, whose
inconstancy

Muslim takes
to flight.

YEZID.
Hegyra 60.
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inconstancy he had so lately and so fatally experienced.

As he was bent only on making his escape, and knew not the country, or whither to go, he wandered a long time without finding any place where he could conceal himself. At last, he saw a light at a distance, and making towards it, found a lone house. Having knocked at the door, it was opened by an old woman, of whom he asked some water to drink. He then informed her of the great fatigue he had undergone, and begged she would permit him to stay the remainder of the night in her habitation.

The woman refused to comply with his request, alledging that she had no place where she could lodge him: that she had but one spare room, which was her son's; but that she could not put any person into it, because she expected her son that very night from Cufah, whither he was gone on business, and that she had sat up so late in expectation of his coming home.

Muslim, without being discouraged at her refusal, reiterated his entreaties, and pressed her at least to give him shelter under her roof till day-light. "It is in your power," said he, "to do me a signal service, which you will have no cause to repent of." "But pray who are you, and what would you have me do?" replied the woman. Muslim then told her his name, and how the people had deserted him; which she no sooner heard,

heard, than she readily let him in, and conveyed him to the most secret and retired part of her house. And as he stood in great need of refreshment, she made the best provision for him in her power, and used the best means she could to enable him to pass the night comfortably.

YEZID.
Hegyra 60.
Ch. ær. 679.

Whilst the woman was thus employed, her son came home; and observing his mother to go backwards and forwards in an unusual manner, he asked what was the cause of it. She at first concealed the secret; but upon her son's great importunity, she owned to him, that Muslim having fled from Cufah, he had begged her to give him refuge at her house, and that she had with great pleasure admitted him.

The young Mussulman having heard at Cufah that the governor had promised a reward to the person that should discover Muslim, he resolved to take the benefit of it. After having rested a few hours, he pretended he had business at the city, and setting out early the next morning, went to Obeidollah, and informed him of the discovery he had made.

Upon this information, the governor sent a party of fifty horse, who surrounded the house where Muslim was concealed; and he being informed of his danger, snatched his sword, and went to oppose the horsemen who were then entering the doors. A very brisk attack ensued, and he

Muslim is
taken, and
brought to
Cufah.

YEZID.
Hegyra 60.
Ch. ær. 679.

he behaved with amazing activity and courage; having killed several, and thrice driven the rest of the party out of the house.

It was of some advantage to Muslim, independant of his courage, that the horsemen had received orders to spare him; for the governor, who was desirous of going to the bottom of the conspiracy, had strongly enjoined them to take him (if possible) alive. Spight of his stout resistance, he was at last overpowered with numbers, and grievously wounded; when the party closing in upon him, he was disarmed; and being bound, was mounted on his own mule, and carried to Cufah.

The officer that commanded the detachment observing Muslim to weep, told him that it did not become a man who was at the head of so important and bold an enterprize, and who had just given such evident proofs of courage, to shed tears. Muslim answered, that he wept not for himself, but for Hossein, who, he feared, was on his journey to Cufah. He was so moved at the misfortunes with which that prince was threatened, that he attempted to send him advice not to proceed any farther, but to return to Mecca. For this purpose he applied to one of the horsemen, whom he judged to be of a more courteous and humane disposition than his comrades, and having conversed some time with him on the road, he gave him to understand that
he

he would be amply rewarded if he could procure such information to be given to Hosslein. The soldier promised to send a messenger accordingly, which he performed, but the messenger did not do his part.

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Ch ær. 679.

When Muslim arrived at the castle, he found a great number of the Emirs, who were in the audience-chamber waiting for Obeidollah. It was no difficult matter for Muslim to perceive that the friends of Yezid were highly incensed against him: they even refused him a draught of water which he asked for on his arrival, telling him he should have no drink till he drank the Hamin.*

Though this outset prognosticated nothing in favour of Muslim, he was far from being dejected; on the contrary he shewed great firmness and resolution. When the governor appeared he did not salute him; and some that were present having taken the liberty of reproving him for it, he boldly answered, that if even Yezid were there, he should not think himself obliged so to do, unless he would give him his life.

Obeidollah being seated, with the rest of the Emirs, sharply reprimanded Muslim for raising disturbances and divisions amongst the people of Cufah, and of the rest of Irak, who were before that time peaceable and unanimous: "The inhabitants of Cufah,

* A scalding liquor, which the Mahometans feign shall be the drink of the damned in hell.

and

YEZID.
Hegyra 60.
Ch. ar. 679.

and of the rest of Irak are ready to prove the contrary of what you assert," answered Muslim with great boldness: "they have not forgot the cruelties of your father Ziyad, (which surpassed even those of a Cosroes) who tyrannized over the people, and made the cities and fields to flow with their blood. I came here, to subject those wretched inhabitants to the mild and equitable laws of a prince, who would have governed them according to justice, and the book revealed to the prophet†."

The governor, enraged at Muslim's discourse, treated him very roughly; and amongst other things told him, he was not surely guided by the determination of the book, when he used to tipple wine at Medina. Muslim denied the accusation, and for the truth of his assertion appealed to God. At last, after some few other altercations, the governor pronounced sentence of death upon him. Having permission to make his will, Muslim whispered one of his friends to whom he gave seven hundred pieces of gold, and begged he would take care to prevent Houssein from proceeding any further on his journey. One of the by-standers having overheard what Muslim said, informed the governor of it, who declared that if Houssein would be quiet; no person would dis-

† Meaning the Koran.

turb him ; but if he was the aggressor, they would not spare him.

YEZID.
Hegyra 60.
Ch. ær. 679.

In a short time Obeidollah caused Muslim to be carried to the top of the castle, where he was beheaded. His head was first thrown down to the bottom, and his body after it. Hani was beheaded the same day ; but the execution was performed in the streets of Cufah. The governor sent both the heads to Yezid, with a letter containing a full account of that event.

Muslim and
Hani are be-
headed.

Whilst this bloody scene was acting at Cufah, Houssein was making preparations for his journey thither, expecting to find things in a most favourable situation for him. Besides the account which Muslim sent him at the time he proposed to take the castle, he had received a great number of letters from the inhabitants of Cufah, earnestly requesting him to appear amongst them. They at the same time sent him a list of the number of those he might absolutely depend on ; which, according to an arabian author, amounted to one hundred and forty thousand persons.

Houssein pre-
pares for his
journey to
Cufah.

The earnest and repeated solicitations of his adherents in Cufah, and the great number of friends he expected to find there, made Houssein resolve to accept the invitation. He sent to Cufah a trusty friend, named Kais, to give notice of his approach, and then made the necessary preparations for his departure, spight of the prudent remonstrances of

of

YEZID.
Hegyra 60.
Ch. ar. 679.

of his friends, who dissuaded him from embarking in so desperate an undertaking. Abdallah the son of Abbas, an old man, venerable on account of his many eminent virtues and consummate prudence, visited him in hopes to prevail on him to give over the design. Houssein was persuaded he should not only fully refute all Abdallah's arguments, but also bring him over to his own opinion, by producing the letters he had received; he looked upon those as so many sure pledges of the success of his enterprize: he added, with a transport of joy, that relying on the assistance of heaven, he could by no means decline going, and putting himself at the head of such a body of brave men, who were ready to sacrifice their lives and fortunes in his cause.

“ I would readily concur with you in opinion,” replied the sage old man, “ if you were certain that the Cufians had taken up arms, killed their governor, driven out Yezid's forces, and were absolute masters of the city, and the whole province. But are they not in the power of their Emirs? are not his forces dispersed over the whole country to bridle the people? I wonder you cannot see through the design of the Cufians in giving you an invitation at such a juncture! they have invited you to embark with them in a war which they are ready to commence, through the turbulence of their dispositions; and they will as readily desert

desert you through their wonted fickleness and perfidy. Have you any security that they will not even oppose you? You will one day see, that they who now seem so forward in your interest, will become your most inveterate enemies: and of this I could give you the clearest proof, if you were disposed to hear me." These remonstrances made no impression upon Houssein, who constantly persevered in a design, which was insensibly leading him to destruction.

After this Abdallah the son of Zobeir came to pay him a visit, and held a long conference with him touching his expedition to Cusah. It was not either his design or his interest to dissuade him from the undertaking: on the contrary, foreseeing that such a step must be fatal to him, he was delighted to find him so resolutely bent on taking it; for if Houssein failed in his attempt, Abdallah would find a more ready way to the Caliphate, which he secretly aspired to, but could entertain no hopes of attaining, so long as Houssein should be living.

However, he mentioned his journey to Cusah as an expedient not very necessary, or very proper for his promotion to the Caliphate. And the reason upon which he grounded his opinion was, that neither the inhabitants of that city, nor even those of the province in general, had any right of election to that dignity. He observed to him that the people of Mecca and Medina were alone intitled to that

YEZID.

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Behaviour of
Abdallah to-
wards Hos-
sein.

YEZID. privilege, and he had better abide by them,
 Hegyra 60. than endeavour to strengthen himself by
 Ch. ær. 679. votes which might be afterwards disputed.

Hossein answered, that he could by no means refuse to accept the offers of the Cufians: he owned, that the Meccans and Medinians had always possessed the right of election to the Caliphate; but that their want of resolution to defend their rights, had, doubtless, induced the Cufians to assume that prerogative; and that they certainly took such a step with a view to shake off the yoke of the Caliphs of the house of Ommiyah, who bestowed all their favours on the Syrians, to the loss and prejudice of the people of Arabia. Abdallah-ebn-Zobeir seemed to be convinced by these reasons, and said to Hossein at parting, “If I had so numerous a body of friends, I would this moment put myself at their head, and make Yezid’s throne shake.”

Abdallah
 strives to di-
 suade him
 from the en-
 terprize.

Abdallah-ebn-Abbas, who had already given such prudent council to Hossein, could not but suppose that his arguments had produced some effect on the mind of the son of Ali; he therefore repeated his visit, that he might know his final resolution.

Hossein used the same language to Abdallah, as he had made use of to all such as opposed his undertaking the journey; and repeated the same reasons he had urged in their former conference on that subject. “If you are resolved to go,” said the old man, “at least do not take your wives and children with you,
 for,

for, I fear your case will be like Othman's, who was murdered, whilst his wives and children stood looking on. Besides," said he, "you have rejoiced the heart of Abdallah-ebn-Zobeir, whom you ought to look upon as your rival; you will leave him behind you in Mecca, and he will soon be master of the whole province of Hejaz. He earnestly wishes for your departure; you are an obstacle to his ambitious designs; which he will openly avow the moment he shall have no longer reason to fear your presence. And I swear by that God, besides whom there is no other, if I was sure that my taking you by the hair of the head, and holding you till they came in and parted us, would be a means to detain you at Mecca, I would do it."

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That zealous mussulman went still further. As he found that Hossein was bent on departing the next morning, he staid with him the whole night, and never ceased entreating him seriously to reflect on the fatal consequences that might attend his taking a step of so great importance; but he had the mortification to find that he made not the least impression upon a mind so strangely prejudiced, and he left him.

Hossein departed from Mecca with a competent retinue consisting of his wives, his children, and servants, and some friends that followed his fortune, in the whole about one hundred persons. He judged that this train would be sufficient, because he expected on

Hossein de-
parts from
Mecca.

YEZID.
Hegyra 60.
Ch. ær. 679.

his arrival at Cufah, to have found all those under arms, of whom Muslim had made mention in the letter he sent to invite him to that city. But the face of affairs there was entirely changed; for on the very day that Houssein set out, the unfortunate Muslim was executed.

The governor
sends out
troops against
him.

Obeidollah, who was apprized of Houssein's approach, sent out against him a body of horse, consisting of 1000 men, under the command of Harro the son of Yezid; who was in no wise disaffected to Houssein's interest, and who appeared inclinable to behave towards him with great respect and moderation, if he would have renounced his design.

Harro being arrived at Asheraph, near the Euphrates, sent a party of his soldiers to the river for water; and ordered them, if they should meet Houssein, by no means to commit any violence against him, but if need were, to assist him in getting such a quantity of water as might be necessary for him and his train.

Houssein invites
Harro to join
him.

These orders were punctually executed. They met Houssein, and behaved towards him with the utmost civility and respect. The son of Ali, deceived by these fair appearances, was in hopes of persuading the detachment to join him; and he desired to speak with the commanding officer. Harro having been informed of his request, consented, and they held a pretty long conference, in which Houssein alledged the invitations of the Cusians

as the reason for his undertaking the expedition, and that they waited only his presence to begin their operations: he added, that considering all things, the conduct of the Cufians was not to be wondered at, for he had a right to the Caliphate. He then alledged proofs in support of his title, and produced the letters he had received from the Cufians, who openly acknowledged the justice of his pretensions, and promised to appear and act in support of them. And finally, he exhorted Harro with his party to submit to and join him, rather than the descendants of the house of Ommiyah, who maintained themselves in possession of the Caliphate only by exercising a tyrannical authority over the Mussulmen.

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“ Ineither know, nor do I desire to know,” replied Harro, “ who are the persons that have prevailed on you to engage in this undertaking; (which I must confess, seems to me a very desperate one.) Nor can I conceive what dependance you can make on the letters of the Cufians. We had no hand in writing them, nor have I any inclination to read them. All I can say is, that my orders are to bring you to the castle of Cufah, so soon as I could meet you. There you will have an opportunity to urge your reasons at large.”

Hoffein declared he would sooner dye than submit to such an order; and he commanded his men to decamp and march. But Harro caused his detachment to wheel, and by that

YEZID.
Hegyra 60.
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motion intercepted them. Houssein in a rage uttered the strongest imprecations * against him. Harro answered, "If any other man had presumed to say so much to me, I would have had satisfaction for the insult. But I have no room to mention your mother, without the greatest respect."

He then commanded his soldiers to withdraw and stand at a little distance, and told Houssein that he had no orders to use violence against him, but that he was commanded by no means to part with him, till he had conducted him to Cufah. "However," added he, "let us take proper measures to prevent my being called in question, or exposed to any extremity on your account, and also to secure you from violence. Write to Yezid and Obeidollah; I will write to them also. If you are the aggressor, and begin the first onset upon the Cufians, you may perhaps gain your point; but if you wait till you are attacked, you will perish."

Whilst he was yet speaking, four horsemen appeared in sight, who came from Cufah. Houssein knowing one of them, who was called Thirmah, entreated Harro that he might be suffered to come up to them; but that officer made some difficulty in consenting, as he did not know what was their design. As soon as they came up, Houssein en-

* In Arabic, the Colatka Ommoka, a common curse amongst the Arabians, and signifying in English, may your mother be childless of you.

quired of him touching the situation of his affairs at Cufah, and received a most melancholly account of the posture they were in.

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“The nobility of Cufah,” said he, “are now against you to a man. It is true the hearts of some of the inhabitants are still with you; but you may depend on it that to-morrow the swords of all will be drawn against you. As for your messenger Kais, whom you sent before you to prepare the way, he was thrown headlong from the top of the castle, by order of Obeidollah, for refusing to curse you and your father Ali*.”

Hoffein is told that his party in Cufah is dispersed.

“I hope,” continued Thirmah, “you will not think of engaging in that enterprize with such a handful of men as now accompany you: for the plains of Cufah are full of horse and foot ready to oppose you. I therefore entreat you not to stir a step further; and if you will accept of a safe retreat, I will conduct you to our impregnable mountain Aja, where I am sure they will not run the risque of coming to attack you; and in this asylum you may remain as long as you shall think fit.”

It is matter of wonder, after having received an account of the defection of his

* At this news Hoffein wept, and repeated this verse of the Koran, “There are some of them who are already dead, and some of them stay in expectation and have not changed.” He then added, “O God! let their mansions be in paradise, and gather them and us together, in the fixed resting place of thy mercy, and the delights of thy reward.”

YEZID.
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chief friends at Cufah, that Houssein did not abandon a design which could not but be fatal to him. And he had a fair opportunity of so doing, as Harro, who still continued with him, would have suffered him to retire without the least opposition. But Houssein persisting in his resolution of going to Cufah, and preparing for his march thither, Thirmah took his leave.

In the mean time affairs took insensibly a different turn. Obeidollah being informed of Houssein's obstinacy, changed his first design of having him brought to Cufah. He was apprehensive that though the people had then declared against him, yet through their natural inconstancy, they might turn in his favour. He therefore dispatched a courier to Harro, with orders that he should conduct the son of Ali to a certain country named in the dispatches, in which were neither cities nor fortresses. And he commanded that Houssein should remain there till further orders.

In a short time that governor caused about 4000 men to march under the command of Amer-ebn-Said, who arriving soon in the neighbourhood of Houssein, sent one of his officers to enquire of him what brought him thither.

Hegyra .61.
Ch. ær. 680.

Houssein, who doubtless had by that time reflected on the little probability there was of success in his enterprize, returned an answer, which, if it had been given a little sooner, might have extricated him from his difficulties. He told the officer, that if the Cusians
had

had not sent him repeated invitations to come and head them, he should not have left Mecca; but as he since found they had changed their sentiments, and rejected him, he was ready and willing peaceably to return with his family and friends to his usual place of residence.

YEZID.

Hegyra 61.

Ch. ær. 680.

This answer was highly pleasing to Amer, as it was likely to put an end to all disputes. That captain was firmly attached to Houssein; when Obeidollah ordered him to march, he even declined the command, and did not accept it till the governor had severely threatened him on account of his refusal. So soon therefore as he was acquainted with Houssein's intentions, he imparted them to Obeidollah.

But the governor, who at first seemed as if he would be satisfied with Houssein's return to Mecca, had also changed his sentiments: and not content with the son of Ali's having dropped the design, Obeidollah now required that he and his adherents should recognize Yezid to be lawful Caliph. He ordered Amer to bring the matter to a speedy issue; and, in order to obtain by the means of force and necessity that which he knew would never be granted with a free will, he ordered that officer in such a manner to surround Houssein's camp, as to cut off his communication with the rivers, a grievous inconvenience in that hot and barren country.

Obeidollah requires Houssein to acknowledge Yezid as Caliph.

The

YEZID.

Hegyra 61.
Ch. ær. 680.

The governors orders having been imparted to Houssein, he sent to Amer, and desired he would confer with him between the two camps. That officer consented to it, and came forthwith to the appointed place; Houssein, who strove to avoid acknowledging Yezid as Caliph, desired that one of the three following conditions might be granted to him. Either 1st, that he might go to Damascus, and make an agreement with Yezid. Or, 2dly, that he might be permitted to return to Mecca. Or, 3dly, that he might be placed in some garrison, where he might make war on the Turks.

Upon the account of these proposals Amer thought he might defer executing Obeidollah's orders: he sent to inform him in what manner Houssein was then disposed to act, and to desire his directions in the matter.

Obeidollah having examined Houssein's proposals, was unwilling alone to determine what answer should be returned. He therefore called in a mussulman of note, called Shamer, and asked his opinion touching the terms that had been offered. Shamer told him, he thought the conditions were deceitful, and calculated only to gain time; and that Houssein ought to be admitted to no terms, till he had sincerely declared his sentiments as to Yezid, acknowledged him as Caliph, and taken the oath of allegiance to him.

This

This opinion determined the governor YEZID.
 (who at first seemed to look on the proposals Hegyra 61.
 as reasonable) and he appointed Shamer him- Ch. ær. 680.
 self to communicate his resolutions to Amer,
 and to inform him that he should kindly re-
 ceive Houssein and his friends, if they would
 comply with the conditions; but in case of
 refusal, that he should cut in pieces all such
 as should make any resistance. And as Obei-
 dollah had reason to apprehend that Amer
 would make some difficulty in executing those
 orders, (as well from what had already pas-
 sed, as from the advice he received of the
 long conference between that officer and Hof-
 sein) he commanded Shamer, in case of
 disobedience of the general, to cause his head
 to be struck off, and to take the command
 in his stead. He at the same time gave par-
 ticular directions, that the sons of Ali, who
 had accompanied their brother Houssein, should
 not be involved in the common calamity, but
 letters of protection and passports should be
 offered to them, that they might come to
 Cufah.

Shamer soon arrived at Kerbela, where the
 two camps of Houssein and Amer were situ-
 ated, and communicated to the latter Obei-
 dollah's orders. In consequence whereof an
 interview was held with Houssein, who re-
 fused to accept the terms offered him: the
 sons of Ali also seemed little inclined to ac-
 cept the letters of protection and passports of-
 fered by the governor, inveighing against
 him,

YEZID.
Hegyra 61,
Ch. ær. 680.

him, and saying, that the protection of God was better than that of the son of Sommiah*. Amer, finding that nothing could bring Houssein to reason, and that he should risque his own destruction in not obeying the Caliph's orders, resolved to attack the son of Ali.

Houssein made the best preparations he could for his defence; and as the number of his men was very small, in comparison to his enemies, he so formed his disposition, as to prevent being forced in his camp. He caused his tents to be strongly corded to each other, and so disposed the ropes that the enemy could not get between them, and also in the night-time covered his flanks with a deep ditch, which was filled with wood and cane, to be set on fire in case of an attack there; so that his camp was only accessible in front.

Combats between Houssein's party and the troops of Cufah.

The next morning Houssein drew up his little troop † in order, and appeared with as much intrepidity as if he had been at the head of a numerous and well-disciplined army; and if he was not immediately defeated, it was owing to the conduct of Yezid's officers, who,

* Sommiah was a loose woman, by whom Abu-Sofian, father of Moawiyah, had a son named Ziyad, who was acknowledged by Moawiyah as his brother, tho' he was illegitimate. So that the imputation of bastardy fell directly on Ziyad, rather than on Obeidollah, who was only grandson to Sommiah; but they reaped up the shame of the father, in order to insult the son. And besides, that manner of expression is not uncommon in the old testament.

† Consisting only of 32 horse and 40 foot.

instead of falling on with their whole body, suffered their soldiers singly to fight hand to hand with the soldiers of Houssein: at least, so Arabian historians relate the matter, and we cannot contradict them, how improbable soever their relation may be.

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Hegyra 61.
Ch. ær. 680.

It is in truth very astonishing to see a body of troops near 5000 strong, commanded by an officer who would have lost his head in case of bad success, trifling away several days in accepting challenges, fighting duels, and tilting with a troop of about one hundred persons, whom they had orders at the same time to treat as rebels.

These single combats lasted three days, during which Houssein's champions distinguished themselves, and almost always were victorious.

Amer, finding that he lost the bravest of his men in these combats, would not permit them to accept any more challenges. He marched up all his troops against Houssein, and the affair was soon over. However, many of Amer's soldiers fell in the attack. Houssein's men, resolving to sell their lives dear, behaved with the utmost bravery; at last their chief, having been wounded with a sword on the head, and having received thirty-three other wounds, expired, covered with blood. Then they cut off his head, in order to send it to Obeidollah.

A Cufian, named Haula, was chosen for that purpose. As he arrived late at Cufah, he

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he found the gates of the castle shut; he therefore went to his own house to pass the night, and deferred waiting on the governor, till the next morning. He awaked his wife, who was in bed, and acquainted her with the cause of his coming in such haste to Cufah. "I have brought with me," said he, "a rarity, upon which the Caliph will set the highest value." His wife, eagerly asking what it was; "It is Houssein's head," replied he. "Here it is; I am commanded to present it to the governor." The woman in a rage immediately leaped out of bed, not that she was terrified at the sight, for the generality of the Arabian women being accustomed to follow the armies, were used to the most bloody adventures: but Houssein being, by Fatima his mother, the prophet's grandson, that reason alone had a strange effect upon the woman's mind. "By the only God," said she, "I will never lie again in the same bed with the man who has brought me the head of the grandson of his apostle."

The Mussulman, who, according to the custom of his nation, had more wives than one, procured another, who was not so difficult, to supply her place. But the poor woman reported, that she could not sleep all night, because of a light which she saw streaming up towards heaven from the place where Houssein's head lay.

The next morning Haula came to the castle, and presented the head to Obeidollah.

He

He at first viewed it with a brutal pleasure; then treated it reproachfully, as if it had been a living object, and struck it over the mouth with his stick. An old man who was then present, took the liberty of reproving the governor for his behaviour, and told him that he ought to have shewed more respect to the head of Houssein. "For," said he, "I have seen the lips of the apostle of God upon those lips." Obeidollah was highly displeased at the reproof, and told Zeid-ebn-Arkom, (for so he was called) that had he not a reverence for his age, he would that moment have caused his head to be struck off.

When he considered the discourse of this old man, he foresaw that Houssein's death would be laid to his charge; he doubted not, but that his enthusiastic followers would frame a multitude of idle and ridiculous tales and fancies; which, tho' despicable in the main, would be of considerable use in raising the credit of the faction of the Alians.

However, he still persevered in the same sentiments: and the manner in which he treated the head of Houssein, shewed what those of his family must expect: they were indeed all made prisoners in that juncture.

Zeinab, Houssein's sister, was brought to the castle, with Ali, son of that unfortunate prince, and a daughter then young. Obeidollah treated Zeinab with great haughtiness.

He exulted on the success of Yezid's arms,
and

YEZID.

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Houssein's
head is
brought to the
governor of
Cusah.

Conference
between him
and Zeinab,
Houssein's
sister.

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and triumphed in the fall of Houssein and his adherents.

Zeinab, who was a woman of great understanding, and of still greater courage, plainly told Obeidollah, that God would call him to judgment for his wicked dealings towards the family of the prophet; which enraged him much, and he replied with great heat and passion; but having been reminded by one of his friends that she was a woman, and that it was beneath him to be offended at what she said, he was pacified, and commended her for her good qualities. He owned she was a true daughter of Ali, who, he confessed, was a man of great note amongst the Mussulmen, and equally famous for bravery, and his admirable skill in poetry: an accomplishment, which, as we have already observed, was by the Arabians set on a level with courage.

She saves the
life of Houssein's son.

But altho' Obeidollah had been so liberal in his praises of Ali and Zeinab, it did not prevent him from forming a resolution of putting the young Ali (Houssein's son) to death. Zeinab, who heard the fatal order issued, that must deprive her of a nephew she dearly loved, sued for his pardon, and even offered to suffer death in his stead. "If you have not yet drank deep enough of the blood of our family," said she to the governor, "add to it mine." Obeidollah seemed to be struck at the uncommon affection she shewed, and Zeinab continued to plead for her

her nephew in so moving a manner, that at last he was forgiven and dismissed. This was the second time that child had run the risque of his life; for at the time of his father's death, he was doomed to destruction upon the field of battle, but he was saved by an officer, and was afterwards called Zein Alabedin, which signifies, the ornament of the religious.

YEZID.
Hegyra 61.
Ch. ær. 680.

As to the unfortunate Hossein, his body was buried in the plain of Kerbela, on the spot where the battle was fought; and a noble mausoleum was afterwards erected over his grave. His head was first set up in Cufah, and afterwards carried about the streets, to strike the party of the Alians with terror, but that spectacle did not answer the end which Obeidollah expected from it.

The governor went from the castle to the chief Mosque, and ascending the pulpit, he reviled the memory of Hossein, in a speech which began thus: "Praised be God, who hath manifestly shewn the truth, and those that follow it, and hath assisted Yezid the governor of the faithful, and his party, and destroyed the liar, and the son of the liar, Hossein the son of Ali and his party."

The governor
reviles the
memory of
Hossein.

These words so highly provoked Ali's party, that several of them rose up in great indignation, in order to depart. Amongst the rest, was a venerable citizen, who was blind of both his eyes, which he had lost in two several battles, and who used to continue

The Alians
resent it.

YEZID.
Hegyra 61.
Ch. ær. 680.

in the Mosque, praying from morning till night. He hearing Obeidollah's speech, cried out, "O son of Merjana*," said he, "the liar, the son of the liar, are you, and your father, and he who made you governor, and his father. O son of Merjana, you kill the prophets, and speak the words of honest men."

The governor, in a rage, caused the man to be forthwith seized; but some of his party rose, and rescued him from the guards. Obeidollah finding the ferment so great, was unwilling to carry matters to extremity, for fear of creating a greater disgust by a numerous execution. However, in a few days, the blind man was taken and put to death, and his body hanged on a gibbet in the square before the Mosque. This execution quelled the mutineers, whose insurrection was disapproved of by the more moderate Alians: the generality of them even blamed the rashness of that Mussulman, fearing he thereby had brought ruin not only on himself, but on the whole party also.

When Obeidollah had fully glutted his vengeance, he sent the head of Hossein to Damascus, together with Zeinab and the rest of the family. He also sent a letter by the commander of the troops that escorted them, to Yezid, in which he wished him joy of the victory gained by his forces, as well as of the utter extirpation of the opposite party,

* Obeidollah's mother was called Merjana.

of which, he said, he had sent him plain and convincing proofs.

This letter did not meet with so favourable a reception as Obeidollah expected: Yezid meant only to keep Houssein within proper bounds, he was grieved at the news of his death, and could not help openly blaming the governor's cruelty. "God curse the son of Sommah," said he, shedding tears: "had Houssein been in my power, I would have forgiven him: God loved Houssein, but did not suffer him to succeed in his designs."

The compassion with which the Caliph was filled, on hearing of the unhappy end of Houssein, was extended to his whole family. Yezid ordered the wives and children of that ill-fated prince to be brought before him; but he was moved when he saw them appear in a mean and wretched condition, and repeating his imprecations on Obeidollah; he said in his wrath, "God curse the son of Sommah, if he had been the father of these women ought he to have suffered them to have appeared in such a wretched condition?"

The sight of young Ali seemed to affect him the more sensibly. He travelled from Cufah to Damascus with a chain about his neck; and in that condition was brought before the Caliph. Yezid was then highly pleased that he had not listened to the cruel advice which had been given him by Ali; for on information being received at court, that he had haughtily refused to exchange a word

YEZID.

Hegyra 61.
Ch. ær. 680.

Yezid blames
Obeidollah's
conduct, and
is moved with
compassion
towards Houssein's family.

YEZID.
Hegyra 61.
Ch. ær. 680.

with the officers of the escort, during the whole journey, one of the Caliph's counsellors represented to him, that the young prince might one day become very formidable; and it was necessary to destroy him, "For," said he, "no man would bring up the whelp of a cur who may one day bite his master." But other counsellors who were more * humane, opposed such a piece of cruelty, and their advice prevailed.

When therefore that young prince appeared at court, the Caliph, moved at the wretched condition he saw him in, caused him to approach, and spoke to him with great affability. He concluded the audience by saying to him: "Your father would by force have deprived me of my throne; but God hath otherwise ordered." Young Ali briskly replied, with this verse of the † Koran "No accident happeneth in the earth, not in your persons, but the same was entered in the book of our decrees, before we created it."

Dispute between the Caliph and Zeinab.

The Caliph also entertained the wives of Hossein, and the rest of his family with all possible civility and respect. But a dispute suddenly arose, which had like to have proved fatal. A Syrian lord having taken a liking

* The humane counsellors said to Yezid, "O emperor of the faithful, do with them as the apostle of God would do, if he were to see them in this their condition." Which moved the Caliph to compassion.

† Koran, chap. 57.

to Fatima, Hossain's youngest sister, who accompanied Zeinab, begged the Caliph would bestow her on him. Zeinab did not stay till Yezid had returned an answer to the nobleman's request, but remonstrated to the Caliph, that as the Syrian was of a different sect from her sister, it was contrary to the law of the apostle to give her to him: "it is even out of your power" said she, haughtily to the Caliph, "to do it."

YEZID.

Hegyra 61.

Chr. ær. 680.

Yezid, enraged to see such an attempt made on his authority, answered Zeinab, that it was in his power, and he would do it if he thought fit. The daughter of Ali replied, that it was not in his power to force them to change their religion. The Caliph, raising himself from his seat, cried out in a fury, "Is it so then that you dare to answer me? it is your father and brother who have renounced the true religion." Zeinab, without being disconcerted, replied in an ironical tone; "You pretend apparently to be in the right way; without doubt your father and mother were so also." The Caliph, who now grew more furious, was going to have treated her with very opprobrious language, when Zeinab, who still preserved her usual pride and grandeur, said, "Though I am, my lord, a woman in affliction, you are the commander of the Faithful; and do you so unjustly abuse your power? these few words conveyed so sensible a reproach, that the Caliph blushed, and was ashamed of having

YEZID.
Hegyra 61.
Ch. ær. 680.

abandoned himself to passion, and thought he could not make a better reparation for his fault than by shewing now as much affability and politeness as he before had violence and rage. He therefore gave orders to conduct Zeinab and her attendants to the warm baths, and soon after sent magnificent robes and various kinds of refreshments.

The Syrian lord, still hoping that the Caliph would interpose his authority to obtain him Fatima, renewed his petition; but Yezid gave him a tart denial, and bid him speak of it no more.

Yezid's affection for
Hossein's two
sons.

By so happy a change of the Caliph's disposition, in favour of this wretched family, they were amply provided of all necessities, and found the bitterness of their past misfortunes a little alleviated. Yezid lodged them all in his palace; and even grew so fond of Hossein's two sons, Ali, and Amru, that he never went abroad without taking them with him. Khaled, Yezid's eldest son, also became very intimate with them, and the Caliph took a singular pleasure in seeing them play together. Being one day desirous of finding out the temper of Amru, who was very little, he asked him if he was willing to fight with his son Khaled, "why not," replied he with vivacity, "give each of us a sword."

A Syrian lord who was present, beheld, with admiration, the courage and resolution of the child; but at the same time reflecting
that

that those rising qualities might in time affect the peace of the state, and that Amru, pursuing the steps of his father Houssein might perhaps occasion a revolution, said to Yezid, “Take care, and be assured that a serpent always produces its like.” Yezid paid little regard to the prognostic, and abated nothing of his tenderness to the child; nor of his kind respects towards the family of Houssein.

YEZID.
Hegyra 61.
Chr. ær. 680.

The family of Houssein having made a long stay at Damascus, notwithstanding the great kindness and civility with which the Caliph treated them, appeared desirous of returning to Arabia, particularly to Medina; where the wives of Houssein were disposed to fix their abode. The Caliph, being acquainted with their desires, consented to them, and ordered every thing necessary to be prepared for their journey.

The family of
Houssein re-
turn to Me-
dina.

When the Caliph dismissed them, he shewed great concern at parting, and embracing young Ali in particular, said to him “Write to me often, and visit me when you conveniently can, and be assured that whatsoever you desire shall be done for you.”

The whole family therefore left Damascus, escorted by a numerous detachment, which the Caliph had put under the command of an officer of note, called Noman-ebn-Bashir. He punctually executed the Caliph’s orders, and behaved towards them with the utmost civility and respect all the way. When they approached Medina, Fatima,

YEZID.
Hegyra 61.
Ch. ær. 680.

who was thoroughly sensible of that officer's great politeness, vigilance and care, said to her sister Zeinab; this Syrian hath behaved so kindly to us, that I think we ought to make him a present. Zeinab was of the same opinion, but the difficulty was, what they should give him, for they were then possessed of nothing of any value, save their bracelets. "Let us then present them to him, said the girl;" Zeinab consenting, they took off their bracelets, and sent them to Noman with an apology; begging he would accept of them as a small token of their respect for his courtesy. He modestly refused the gift, with this generous answer: "If what I have done had been only with a view to worldly interest, a less price than your jewels had been sufficient, but all that I have done was solely to please God and to testify the sincere regard I have for you and for all who are followers of the prophet." He then took his leave of them and returned to Damascus.

This unfortunate family, being now returned to Medina, began to enjoy a tranquillity to which it had been a long time a stranger; yet not till after shedding many tears for the cruel death of the unhappy Houssein.

Authors are divided in their accounts of the place of Houssein's sepulchre.

Some authors assure us that the head of that prince was also sent back to Medina, and interred near his mother Fatima. Others say that it remained at Damascus, and was put in a place called "Bal-al-Faradis,"

‘adis,” that is, “The gate of the gardens.” YEZID.
Hegyra 61.
Ch. ær. 680.
And that afterwards it was removed to Palestine, from whence it was carried by the Caliphs of Egypt and buried at grand Cario, and a monument erected over it, which was called “Meschaid Houssein,” or the sepulchre of Houssein.

But this account cannot be depended upon. Though it is certain that the sect of Ali have published whole volumes of fables touching the fate of the head of Houssein, and even touching the place where the rest of his body was buried, which we have already said was Kerbela. And writers have given a long and particular account of the pilgrimages made to his tomb, and of the great miracles said to be wrought there.

The Persians, who are of the sect of Ali, have to this day the greatest veneration for that Caliph, and his two sons, Hassan and Houssein, whom they call the two lords. But they chiefly hold in reverence Houssein, whom they consider as a martyr: he is as it were the oracle, the saint, or to speak more properly, the idol of the nation; and they say, that if Mahomet could return upon earth he would have cause to be jealous of the great regard and esteem they pay to the memory of his grand-son. Veneration
of the Per-
sians for Hous-
sein.

The peace of the mussulman empire was far from being confirmed by the death of that prince. Abdallah the son of Zobeir, who had never submitted to Yezid’s government, Revolt of
Abdallah the
son of Zobeir.

YEZID.
Hegyra 61.
Ch. ær. 680.

Abdallah is
acknowledg-
ed Caliph
of Medina
and of Mecca.

vernment, declared publicly against him and by his conduct shewed that Yezid had in him a very formidable rival.

Abdallah, who had acquired the esteem and good will of the Arabs by his attachment to the mussulman religion, and more so by his mild and engaging behaviour, made so prudent a management of their disposition in his favour; that he obtained his ends; and was solemnly declared Caliph of Medina and Mecca.

After he was proclaimed Caliph, he harangued the people, and taking advantage of the concern that was in general expressed for the loss of Houssein, endeavoured to prejudice them against Yezid, and to engage all their voices in his own favour. He recalled to their minds the virtues and excellent qualities of that illustrious grandson of the prophet, and drew a moving picture of the perfidy of the Cuffians, who had treated him with indignity after having invited him to come to them. And observing the inclinations of the people of Medina and the great regard that they had for the prince's family; he affected to speak of them with such respect and veneration as had a very strong effect over the whole nation in his own favour.

He acted in the same manner at Medina, whither he went shortly afterwards, and where he was received with the same acclamations as at Medina. The speeches he made

made in praise of Houssein, recalled to their minds the love they had borne to that prince, and they were ready to avenge his death, by shaking off the yoke that had occasioned it.

YEZID.
Hegyra 61.
Ch. ær. 680.

Yezid was greatly surprized when he heard of this revolution. He wrote letters full of menaces against Abdallah, and even sent a silver collar to the governor of Medina, with orders to put it about his neck, and send him thus to Damascus. But Abdallah's party was so strong that the governor dared not attempt to put the Caliph's order in execution.

Amru-ebn-Saïd, governor of Mecca, was also greatly embarrassed, when he saw Abdallah publicly performing the functions of Caliph. He found it necessary to act with the utmost caution and circumspection in so critical a juncture. And finding he was not able to cope with the enemy, he had recourse to dissimulation, and pretended that he only waited for the countenance of some person of note to join with the rest of the people.

On this pretence he consulted a Mussulman of great repute, named Abdallah, the son of Amru, who was famous for his profound understanding, who used to study the stars, and also the writings of the Jews, particularly the prophecies of Daniel, which he had carefully examined. The governor having sent for him, asked what was his opinion of what had happened at Medina
and

The governor
of Mecca
consults
touching the
revolt of Ab-
dallah.

YEZID.
Hegyra 61.
Ch. ær. 680.

and Mecca; to whom he boldly replied, that Abdallah would be king, and continue such to his death.

This prophetic answer being spread through Arabia, those who were attached to Abdallah-ebn-Zobeir grew more bold, whilst he made use of every means to preserve himself for the throne. In the mean time Amru, who was cautioned by this prediction, omitted nothing that was in his power to guard against the designs of the new Caliph.

Yezid removes him from his government.

The enemies of Amru took this opportunity to prejudice those who were near Yezid, whom they boldly accused of negligence or cowardice for not having seized upon Abdallah when he first revolted. Yezid, being enraged, removed Amru, and put in his place Waled the son of Otbah; who had no sooner taken possession of his government, than he caused a great number of the servants and dependants of his predecessor Amru to be imprisoned. Three hundred were seized on the very first day; and their having been barely acquainted with the last governor was enough to expose a man to the violence and fury of Waled.

Hegyra 62.
Ch. ær. 681.

So harsh a conduct displeased every one, and Amru thought the general discontent was a favourable circumstance for prevailing on his friends to strike a blow he had meditated, and which could not fail of success. He sent a private message to the prisoners, informing them that he was going to Damascus,

mascus, to acquaint the Caliph with the situation of affairs; that if they chose to join him, they must, by the help of their numbers, break open the prison. He assured them that they should be duly supported in case of opposition, and that they should find ready in the street a sufficient number of camels, to carry them to that city.

Amru took the advantage of going to Damascus, where he was well received by the Caliph, who nevertheless reproached him with the little care that he had taken of his interests in the late occurrences. "I beseech you, commander of the faithful, to hear me," replied Amru, "That which is present" added he, "you can better see than what is passed, the Meccans and the Arabs of Hegiaz were so very outrageous, and assembled in such prodigious numbers to proclaim Abdallah, that the forces which I then had were not sufficient to attack them. On the other hand, Abdallah, who was jealous of me, was always upon his guard, and never appeared but with a great number of his friends to attend him. It is true, I affected a great deal of indifference with regard to every thing that happened; but at the same time I was watching for a favourable opportunity to seize him. I very well saw, that notwithstanding his great credit and his able politics, that he was embarrassed in all his proceedings; for I had taken

YEZID.
Hegyra 62.
Ch. ær. 681.

Amru justifies his conduct before the Caliph.

YEZID.
Hegyra 62.
Ch. ær. 681.

taken care to guard all the avenues to the city, and none were suffered to enter without telling their name. Those whom I found were Abdallah's friends, I dismissed immediately without any further inquiry; as to those who appeared to have no connection with him, I enquired the cause of their coming to Mecca, and made them tell me where they proposed to lodge; and in consequence, I caused all their steps to be closely watched; you see what I thought fit to be done for your service. And now you have sent Waled, the son of Otbah, who, (if we may judge from the beginning he has made) will give you such an account of his administration as will justify my conduct, and convince you of the sincerity of my advice."

Yezid was greatly struck at Amru's defence, and owned it had surprized him. He expressed great resentment against those who had basely done Amru so ill an office, and obligingly told him, that he knew his enemies well, and was persuaded there was not one amongst them that could be compared with him for probity; he from that moment took Amru again into favour, desired him to continue at court, and treated him with great distinction.

Complaints
are made
against the
new governor
of Mecca.

Publick fame soon confirmed what Amru had said of the new governor. Complaints came from the several districts of Arabia, and at last Abdallah-ebn-Zobeir wrote

wrote a letter to Yezid, in which he complained that he had sent a man to be governor there, who was absolutely incapable of so important a trust. And he at the same time even gave the Caliph to understand that he would recal Waled, and send one in his place with whom he might treat, and who had the means of accommodating those troubles.

YEZID.
Hegyra 62.
Ch. ær. 681.

This letter greatly surprized Yezid. He was pleased to see his rival acknowledge his power, and even to ask of him the exercise of it in the very city of which Abdallah had caused him to be proclaimed Caliph. As this letter also spoke of a peace, which was what Yezid wished for, he immediately took the proper method to remove the obstacles that opposed it, and recalled Waled, and appointed in his place Othman*, a relation of his own. He was one indeed of but an indifferent understanding, devoid both of sense and experience, in a word very incapable of unravelling the intrigues which then divided the empire of the Arabs.

Yezid sends
Othman in
his place.

Othman set out for Arabia, and stopping at Medina, received the submission of some of them who acknowledged Yezid, which he considering as the act of the whole nation, imagined from thence the authority of that prince to be founded on a rock, and

Othman assures Yezid of the submission of the Medinese.

* The son of Mahomet, and grandson of Abu-Sofian.

YEZID.
Hegyra 62.
Ch. ær. 681.

The ambaf-
fadors enter-
tain a con-
tempt for
Yezid.

without further enquiry, he sent ambaffadors to Damafcus to affure the Caliph of the obedience of the Medinians.

This embaffy was more hurtful to Yezid than all the plots that had already been contrived againft him. The extraordinary appearance of a court where the fovereign paid no regard either to religion, or even to common decency, was ample matter of offence to the ambaffadors. And in fact Yezid paffed his days in indolence and frivolous amusements: he minded nothing but fplendid entertainments, where, in contempt of the muffulman law, they drank all forts of wine to the utmoft excefs; and his evenings were ufually fpent in company of finging and dancing women, and in converfation with buffoons and other mean fellows.

The medinian deputies were received with great pomp and civility. They continued fome time at the Caliph's court; and at their departure he made them confiderable presents: but all he could do was not able to get the better of the great indignation and contempt they had conceived againft him.

When the ambaffadors returned to that city, they did not in the leaft fpare Yezid; on the contrary, they gave fuch a defcription of the debaucheries of his court, and in particular of his own diforderly life, as inflamed

flamed the people against him. And they, being ashamed of obeying a prince who they judged unworthy to rule over men, took advantage of the then reigning divisions to shake off his authority, and in a private assembly of the ambassadors, and of some of the principal men of Medina, after having expatiated on the causes of complaint against that prince, they declared him unworthy the throne, and deposed him from the Caliphate.

YEZID.
Hegyra 62.
Ch. ær. 681.

Yezid was soon informed of the description which the ambassadors had given of his person and conduct at Medina. In the first emotions of his passion, he resolved to send a body of troops to Medina, to punish the inhabitants of that city; but hearing that one of those ambassadors, named Almundir, was gone to Basorah, and had there spoke of him full as injuriously as the others, he determined to cause him to be seized, and by punishing him, to intimidate his fellows. With this view he wrote to Obeidollah, who was then governor of that city, and commanded him to bind Almundir, and confine him strictly till further orders.

Yezid orders
Almundir,
one of the
ambassadors,
to be seized;

But his commands were not executed. Obeidollah, who had long entertained a friendship for Almundir, took measures for sending him out of Basorah, without running the risque of incurring the Caliph's resentment; he advised him (as the most

The governor
of Basorah
contrives
means for Al-
mundir to es-
cape.

YEZID.

Hegyra 62.

Ch. ær. 681.

certain way of succeeding) to gain some of the chief citizens, and then, after publick prayer, one day to represent that he came to Basorah on private affairs, which he had successfully terminated, and was desirous for urgent reasons to go to Medina; but he had heard that the governor had issued orders that no person should depart without his leave, and he was then to entreat the assembly that they would intercede with the governor that he might be permitted to go about his business. This scheme succeeded, as it had been foreseen. The inhabitants loudly required that Almundir might be permitted to leave Basorah. The governor at first made some difficulty; but he was forced to comply with their request, and he was delighted to have that seeming force put upon him, which at the same time that it enabled him to save his friend, proved his own security against the Caliph's displeasure.

Almundir ex-
claims against
the Caliph.

The arrival of Almundir at Medina, augmented the publick hatred against Yezid. He confirmed all that the ambassadors had already said to the disadvantage of that prince; and confessed, that though he had received considerable presents from him, he could not help openly speaking his sentiments of a sovereign, who was a Mussulman only in name, and neglected every duty of his religion; who gloried in his scandalous

lous debaucheries, and by his example drew his whole court into the utmost libertinism.

YEZID.

Hegyra 62.
Ch. ær. 681.

Yezid, being alarmed at his escape, and vexed at the reports he had spread in Medina, sent to that city Noman-ebn-Bashir to quiet the people, and persuade them to return to their allegiance. But Noman, did not succeed: on the contrary, that envoy having threatened them with a body of troops, which he said the Caliph would certainly send amongst them if they persisted in their rebellion, the Medinians made preparations to repel force with force. They acted in concert with the Meccans, and immediately appointed a general to command their army. Abdallah-ben-Mothi was appointed to head the Coreischites, and Abdallah, the son of Hantéla, commanded the Medinians.

The inhabitants of Mecca and Medina openly revolt.

However, before they entered upon action, another deputation was sent to Damascus, which was attended with no better success than the former. Though Yezid made very valuable presents both to Abdallah-ebn-Hantéla, and those who composed his train, they did not think him more worthy the Caliphate, and the account they gave at their return of the Caliph's person and court, was full as unfavourable as that which was given by the former negotiators.

In this year the Medinians solemnly declared against Yezid. They broke out into open rebellion, in a manner which bordered

Hegyra 63.
Ch. ær. 682.

YEZID.
Hegyra. 63.
Ch.ær. 682.

The Medinians depose
Yezid.

dered on madness. When the people assembled in the mosque in order to depose him, their proceedings were tumultuous, and without the least form or order. One of them rising up, took off his turban, and threw it on the ground, saying at the same time, "I lay aside Yezid, as I lay aside this turban." In a moment such of the assembly as were within hearing followed his example; a vast number of turbans were soon flying about, and they that threw them repeated the same form of words. In another part of the mosque, a Mussulman pulled off his shoe, and said, "I put away Yezid, as I put away this shoe." The Mussulmen who were near him, also pulled off their shoes and threw them down, repeating what he had said. And thus was Yezid solemnly deposed from the sovereign power.

They force
the Ommyans to retire
into the castle.

It may be supposed that after the Medinians had proceeded thus far, they would endeavour to compleat their work. Othman, governor of Mecca, who had remained at Medina during all the disturbance, was driven out, and the whole family of Ommyah, with all their friends and dependants, were sentenced to be banished. But instead of obeying the sentence, they staid in Medina, and took refuge in the house of Merwán-ebn-Hakem, governor of the city, where the Medinians closely besieged them. But as the Ommyans consisted of about one thousand men, and as the governor was also

also provided of some forces to defend himself, it was no difficult matter to hold the besiegers in play; and the Ommiyans had time to send an express to Damascus, to inform Yezid of the dangerous situation they were in, and of the event which had occasioned it.

YEZID.
Hegyra 63.
Ch. ær. 682.

The Caliph, enraged at the revolt of the Medinians, at last resolved to put in execution the menaces he had so often uttered, of punishing their insolence. To this end he held a conference with Amru-ebn-Saïd, who agreed there was no time to lose, and that a body of troops must be sent to Medina. He even gave some advice in what manner the enterprize should be conducted; and the Caliph was so pleased with the methods Amru proposed, that he offered him the chief command of the expedition. But the latter excused himself on divers accounts, and amongst others, that as the Meccans had concurred with the Medinians, the Coreischites, which was one of the chief tribes of Mecca, would warmly engage in the war, and there would doubtless be a very great effusion of blood; to which he could by no means contribute, as he was so nearly related to the chiefs of that tribe.

Amru refuses to command the troops sent against the Medinians.

Yezid seemed convinced by these reasons, and pressed him no farther. He sent for Meslem, the son of Okbad, an officer of great merit, who willingly accepted the command,

Yezid gives the command to Meslem.

YEZID.
Hegyra 63.
Chr. ær. 682.

command, though he was very aged and infirm. But this he did rather with a view to subdue the rebellious Medinians, than to relieve the Ommiyans, who had taken shelter in the castle. He maintained that they were cowards, and did not deserve to be assisted, since, being so numerous, they had suffered themselves to be shut up, instead of cutting a way through their enemies sword in hand, and making a gallant retreat. And he even proposed to the Caliph that he might halt near Medina, and not assist them till they deserved encouragement by exerting themselves.

But Yezid did not relish this advice; he told Meslem his life would be a burden to him if they were not safe, and therefore he must extricate them whether they deserved it or not: but to avoid too great an effusion of blood, he commanded the general to summon the town on his arrival; to repeat the summons the second day, in case they refused to surrender; and to do the like the third day: after which he should storm the city, and give it up for three days to the mercy of the soldiers. He nevertheless gave particular directions touching young Ali and his family. "I know," said the Caliph, "that neither he, nor any of his family are concerned in the measures of the rebels, wherefore be careful of their safety, and shew them the utmost respect."

These

These orders given, the Caliph reviewed his troops, which amounted to twelve thousand horse, and five thousand foot; he invested Meslem with the command, and caused him to march forthwith.

YEZID.

Hegyra 63.
Ch. ær. 682.

The Medinians were not intimidated on the approach of the Caliph's troops. They rejected the summons with contempt, and obliged Meslem to attack them in form. They for some time made a bold and vigorous defence, but their chief officers having been slain in several attacks, and finding that they should soon be in want of provisions, they began to think of their safety, and proposed a capitulation.

The Medinians are besieged, and forced to surrender.

The general answered, that as they had refused the offers he made the three first days after his arrival, he would not receive them but at discretion; and the Medinians were reduced to such extremity, that they were forced to submit to the will of the conqueror. They therefore opened their gates, and Meslem entered the city at the head of his troops sword in hand. For some time no disorders were committed; the general having commanded the soldiery to remain quiet, till he should give the signal, and they continued under arms expecting his orders.

Meslem used that precaution, that he might have time to secure Ali, and the rest of Houssein's family, as the Caliph had commanded. He therefore sent for them, and

Ali's family saved from plunder.

YEZID.
Hegyra 63.
Chr. ær. 682.

they came before him full of fear, as men that expected to be the first victims immolated to the Caliph's fury; but they were agreeably surprized when the general treated them with great goodness and affability, strove to quiet their fears, and gave to Ali, who was at their head, the utmost proofs of esteem, and even of respect. He caused Ali to mount on his own camel, and appointed a large body of troops to escort him and his family to a place of safety.

Medina is
sacked.

This done he gave the signal, and the city was given up to the fury of the soldiers. They put all to the sword that they met, except about a thousand women, whom they got with child; as to pillage, they made no distinction; they plundered every thing that was valuable, and set fire to what they could not carry away.

Death of
Meslem.

Meslem, loaded with the spoils of the Medinians, led his victorious army to Mecca, with a design either to seize Abdallah, or to ruin the city, in case the inhabitants should make any resistance; but that general was seized on the road with a distemper that carried him off almost suddenly. The command having devolved by right on a captain named Hossein, whom Yezid had appointed lieutenant-general, he put himself at the head of the Syrian army, who continued their march, and shortly appeared under the walls of Mecca, to which they laid siege.

Hossein suc-
ceeds him,
and besieges
Mecca.

The

The operations of the besiegers were not attended with the success the general expected. Abdallah, since he had fixed his residence in that city, had caused some additional works to be erected, which rendered the approaches to it very difficult ; insomuch that Houssein, who expected to have taken the place after a very short siege, had furiously battered the walls near forty days without making any considerable impression upon them. However he still continued the siege, and pushed on the works so vigorously, that he set fire to part of the city, and with his battering engines destroyed the most considerable edifices. The Syrians, encouraged by these advantages, depended upon taking Mecca, and making it share the same fate with Medina, but a piece of news arrived, which put an end to all hostilities.

Yezid was no more. That Caliph died at Hawwarin, a city of Syria, in the territories of Hems, after having reigned three years and six months. So soon as the account of his death reached the Syrian camp, Houssein caused the attack to cease, and demanded a conference with Abdallah. The latter having consented, was much surprized to hear Houssein make an offer of acknowledging him as Caliph, and joining him with his whole army. Having reflected some time on so advantageous an offer, he did not think fit to trust Houssein: he thanked that officer

YEZID.

Hegyra 63.

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Death of
Yezid.Abdallah declines being
recognized by
Houssein's
army.

YEZID.

Hegyra 64.
Ch. ær. 683.

officer for his good will, and told him, that for many reasons of the utmost consequence, he could not possibly accept his offer.

We are not told what was the motive to his refusal. Perhaps he suspected that Houssein meant to ensnare him by such specious proposals. However it was, he returned into the city, and in a short time Houssein caused his troops to decamp, and, together with Merwán-ebn-Hakem, and those of the house of Ommiyah, who had remained at Medina with that governor, (where he protected them from all attempts of Abdallah's party) marched into Syria.

Why the
Mussulmen
condemned
Yezid,

The subjects of Yezid did not lament his death. That Caliph had rendered himself odious and despicable on account of his luxury and debauchery, and especially of his irreligion. It could not be laid to his charge that he favoured one sect more than another. He equally despised them all, and took a pleasure in openly infringing the laws and customs established by Mahomet. He was the first Caliph that drank wine publicly, and was waited upon by eunuchs. Besides, he was fond of dogs, for which he was reproached by the more scrupulous Mahometans, who held that animal in utter detestation.

He likewise drew on himself the hatred of the people, on account of two vices which seem very opposite, I mean, prodigality and covetousness, which he carried to the
utmost

utmost excess. Being greedy of the property of others, he often plundered the honest subject of the money he had laboriously gained; whilst, on the other hand, he lavished away great sums on women of a debauched life, musicians, and base courtiers, who meanly applauded him for his luxury and other irregularities.

YEZID.

Hegyra 64.
Ch. ær. 683.

The only merit arabian writers allow him is, that he excelled in poetry*. That talent, so unlikely to make a sovereign respectable, was, as we have observed, held in great esteem by the Mussulmen; it went hand in hand (if we may be allowed the expression) with bravery, and was a part of the encomium of the greatest captains.

A taste for poetry was instilled into him from his infancy by his father Moawiyah, who had married Moslem, Yezid's mother, only because she was an excellent poetess. He ordered that in his son's education, the study of poetry should not be forgot; and, unhappily for that young prince, it was the only part of education in which he succeeded: for in other respects he had none of those qualities by which a sovereign acquires the esteem and veneration of posterity. And therefore some arabian authors say, that to make the empire of the Mussulmen flourish, it ought to be in the hands

* It is said by some, that his chief talent lay in making a drunken catch.

YEZID.
Hegyra 64.
Ch. ær. 683.

of princes either pious, such as were the four first Caliphs, or liberal as Moawiyah; but when it was governed by a prince who had neither piety nor generosity, such an one as Yezid was, all would be lost.

Though Yezid had possessed ever so many virtues, yet his having permitted the city of the prophet to be plundered and profaned, would have obscured them all. That prince did not design to consider that Medina had served as a retreat to the primitive Mussulmen, and that therein were carefully preserved the precious remains of the founder both of the state and of his religion. These considerations were not sufficient to restrain his fury; and he allowed his soldiers to commit such outrages in the city, during three days, that devout Mussulmen do not scruple to say, that God dealt with him as a tyrant, and cut him off in the flower of his age, as a judgment upon him for his presumption.

Under his Caliphate the Mussulmen conquered all Chorasan, and put the states of the prince of Samarcand under contribution. Salem, the son of Ziyad, who was then in the twenty-fourth year of his age, commanded upon that expedition.

Yezid left several children behind him; but mention is made only of Moawiyah, the second of that name, who succeeded him,

him, and Khaled, who did not attain the Caliphate after his brother's abdication, because he was then too young.

YEZID.

Hegyra 64.
Ch. ær. 683.

M O A W I Y A H II.

The EIGHTH CALIPH.

SO soon as Yezid was dead, his son Moawiyah II. was proclaimed Caliph at Damascus. He was a man of so weak a constitution, that his life could not be much depended on. The bad example of his father had in no wise influenced his education; and though he was the son of a man who gloried in his impiety, he on the contrary was very religious. He was of the sect of the Alkadarij, a branch of the Motazeli. Those sectaries asserted that all the actions of man depended on his free will; whereas the other Mussulmen maintained, that God, by his determinate decrees, was the immediate cause of all human actions. The Alkadarij, as well as the Motazeli, rejected that opinion, holding, that it destroyed the liberty of man, and made God the author of evil.

Hegyra 64.
Ch. ær. 683.

Moawiyah's
character.

Though Moawiyah had by birth a right to the throne, and though he was placed on it by the unanimous consent of the people, he was not dazzled by the glitter of a crown. Before he accepted it, he was resolved

Moawiyah
asks council
whether he
ought to ac-
cept the Ca-
liphate.

MOAWIYAH
II.

Hegyra 64.
Ch. ær. 683.

solved to ask council, and know if he was fit to sustain the weight of government. He therefore sent for a venerable Mussulman, named Omar al-Mekfous, who had been his master, and in whom he placed the greatest confidence. He proposed the difficulty to Omar, and asked him whether he ought to accept the Caliphate or not.

Omar, who in all probability was desirous of setting before his eyes the importance of the trust in question, and how grievous a thing it would be if he should follow his father's steps, told him, that if he found himself able to administer impartial justice to the Mussulmen, and to acquit himself of all the duties of that dignity, he ought to accept it; otherwise he could not in conscience take the burthen upon him.

However, Moawiyah accepted the crown: but from that very moment he ascended the throne, his mind was filled with reflections on the engagements he had entered into, and he was constantly employed in examining if he was able to perform them. In short, he had scarce reigned six weeks, when he came to a resolution of surrendering the crown.

He abdicates
the Caliphate.

To this end he convened the chief officers of the state, imparted to them his design, and acquainted them with the motives to it. He told them, that when he first entertained the thoughts of abdicating,
he

he designed to have followed the examples of Abubecre and Omar, in taking measures for appointing a successor worthy to rule over them; but fearing those measures would render him in some sort accountable for the choice that should be made in consequence of them, he was resolved to make a pure and absolute resignation, and to leave the choice of a successor entirely at their disposal.

MOAWIYAH
II.

Hegyra 64.
Ch. ær. 683.

The nobles earnestly intreated him still to keep a dignity, to which he had so just a right. And on his refusal, they desired that he would at least choose a person from amongst them, whom he should judge worthy to succeed to the Caliphate; but the young prince remaining inflexibly fixed in the resolution he had taken, they were forced to desist. Moawiyah therefore made a solemn and formal abdication. As it was not possible to proceed forthwith to a new election, the Damascenes chose a regent, whose power was to continue till the appointment of a new Caliph. Their choice fell on Dehac, the son of Kais, who forthwith assumed the reins of government.

Dehac appointed regent.

The family of Ommiyah were extremely irritated at this proceeding of Moawiyah. And as they supposed his abdication was owing to the advice given him by Omar al-Mekfous, they wrecked their vengeance on that Mussulman, and buried him alive.

Moawiyah

MOAWIYAH
II.

Hegyra 64.
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Death of Mo-
awiyah.

Moawiyah did not live long after he had renounced the Caliphate. He led a very retired life; having shut himself up in a chamber, from whence he scarce ever stirred till he died, some say of the plague, and others of poison.

This Caliph was surnamed Abu-leilah, that is, “father of night,” as well on account of his love of solitude, as of his natural weakness of constitution, which prevented him from appearing much abroad in the day time.

Whilst that young prince, who was convinced of his inability to bear the weight of a crown, to which he was justly intitled, was taking measures to free himself from the burthen, great disturbances arose in Arabia, which did not prognosticate a quiet reign to the person that should be chosen at Damascus to succeed him.

Abdallah, the son of Zobeir, who had been proclaimed Caliph at Medina and Mecca in the days of Yezid, seemed now to be established in all the territories of the Mussulmen, Syria only excepted. And on the other hand Obeidollah, who was at the same time governor of Basorah and Cufah, was taking measures, which, though they did not seem calculated to attain the Caliphate, were yet such as must prove highly prejudicial to the person that should be invested with the supreme power.

He

He was at Basorah, when he received advice of Yezid's death: he immediately mounted the pulpit, and having acquainted the Basorians with it, he made them a studied speech, in which he set before them all they had suffered under the government of the Ommyan Caliphs. He advised them, however, not totally to shake off the yoke, but remonstrated to them, that as they were in every respect the most considerable nation in the empire, they could easily subsist independant of others, and form a separate state, till the divisions in Syria, touching the Caliphate, should be reconciled. For which purpose he advised them to choose a person duly qualified to be the protector of their state: after which, if the Mussulmen agreed upon a successor, they might acknowledge him if they thought fit; but if the choice was not agreeable to them, they might remain as they were, till one was appointed that they approved of.

Hegyra 64.
Ch. ær. 683.
Obeidollah
is acknow-
ledged pro-
tector at Ba-
sorah.

The Basorians were pleased with Obeidollah's proposal, and immediately offered to chuse him protector of the kind of republick they were about to form. Obeidollah refused to accept it many times, affectedly, as may be concluded from his harangue; but complied at last, overcome by their importunity: and so soon as he had consented, the Basorians took an oath of fealty to him, protesting at the same time that the oath should be no longer binding, than till all

Hegyra 64.
Ch. ær. 683.

things were settled, and the Syrians agreed upon a Caliph.

He vainly
endeavours at
the same ho-
nour at Cu-
fah.

This done, he immediately sent a deputation to Cufah to inform them of what had passed, hoping they would readily follow the example of the Basorians. But things fell out quite otherwise; the Cufians received the message with indignation, and insulted the chief deputy; and though he was Obeidollah's lieutenant, they threw dust in his face, whilst he was haranguing the people.

The inhabi-
tants of Ba-
sorah rise, and
force him to
retire.

This event staggered the Basorians. Having received advice of the aversion which the Cufians had shewn to Obeidollah's proposal, they repented they had so precipitately complied with it, and revoked the oath of fealty they had taken to him. Disputes ran so high, that Obeidollah, finding he could not maintain his ground in the country, resolved to make his escape, and he caused a report to be spread that he was going into Syria.

But before he departed, he seized to his own use all the money which was then laid up in the treasury of Basorah, and which amounted to sixteen millions; part of which he divided amongst his relations, and the remainder he kept to be employed in the prosecution of his designs, which however he was forced to abandon. He offered large sums of money to some of the tribes to engage them to take up arms in his behalf; but they refused it; and indeed he had rendered himself so obnoxious by his cruelties
that

that even his own relations refused to assist him. Hegyra 64.
Ch. ær. 683.

Finding Basorah too hot for him, he departed from that city, accompanied with about one hundred persons. And it was happy for him that he tarried no longer; for the people, whom his enemies had stirred up against him, plundered his house and pursued him, but they could not overtake him.

About the time of Obeidollah's flight, Hofsein, general of the Syrian army, returned to Damascus from the siege of Mecca. Moawiyah, the son of Yezid, had just then abdicated the Caliphate, and great stir was making about the choice of a person to succeed him. Disturbances
about the
choice of a
successor to
Moawiyah. Hofsein readily confessed, that knowing Moawiyah's inability, he had offered his allegiance to Abdallah, the son of Zobeir; but that he had refused to accept it: that he seemed content with having been acknowledged sovereign of Arabia, and shewed little concern touching what passed in Syria.

Hofsein afterwards held a pretty long conference with Merwan-ebn-Hakem, and the other Ommyians who had accompanied him to Damascus. He told them, that considering the present posture of affairs, they ought to think of settling the government in Syria, and either submit to Abdallah, who would make no scruple of accepting the Caliphate, when he should be called to it by the voice of the nation; or to some other person, able

Hegyra 64.
Ch. ær. 683.

Abdallah is
excluded the
Caliphate.

to cope with Abdallah, who would always prove a dangerous rival.

These remonstrances had like to have proved of the utmost advantage to Abdallah. Dehac, the son of Kais, who commanded at Damascus, was his fast friend; and even Merwan, whose vote was of no small consequence, declined in favour of Abdallah. But in the interim Obeidollah being arrived at that city, spoke with great warmth to Merwan touching the declaration he had made. He told him, it was a shame that a person of his distinction, who was at the head of the noble family of the Coraischites, should entertain a thought of submitting to Abdallah, the open enemy to his house. These remonstrances were effectual, and they no longer thought of appointing him Caliph.

The Basorians invite him to accept of it.

But whilst these steps were taken to ruin Abdallah's interest in Syria, his affairs seemed to prosper more and more in Arabia. The flight of Obeidollah, amongst other things, was so advantageous an event, that it procured him the possession of Basorah. The inhabitants of that city were altogether in tumult and confusion, and could not agree in the choice of a governor. After having successively elected several persons to that office, and deposed them from it, they at last wrote to Abdallah to take the government upon him.

It is generally agreed that Abdallah might have attained the Caliphate, if he had acted with

with due prudence and precaution; but the report which he unwisely suffered to be propagated immediately after Yezid's death, that he had given orders to his lieutenant in Medina to exterminate the whole house of Ommiyah, induced the latter (who had before resolved to submit to him) to provide for their safety, and retire to Damascus under the guard of Houssein and his troops. This event proved highly prejudicial to Abdallah's interest, and prevented him from being universally recognized in the mussulman dominions.

Hegyra 64.
Cn. ær. 683.

However, he still enjoyed the title and prerogatives of Caliph in a country of great extent, and capable of forming a potent state. He was acknowledged by the people of Irak, Hejaz, Yeman, and Egypt, and had even a strong party in Syria. From whence several arabian authors have ranked him in the number of Caliphs, and place him next to Moawiyah the second.

He is acknowledged Caliph in several provinces.

However, I have been induced, for several reasons, not to observe the same order. In the first place, I thought it would be improper to break into the series of the Ommiyan Caliphs, by inserting one who was not of the same house. And as Abdallah was raised to the Caliphate during the reign of Yezid, and enjoyed that dignity in the days of the succeeding Caliphs, till the time of Abdalmelek, I see no reason why he should be placed after either of those Caliphs. And finally, the

Hegyra 64.
Ch. ær. 683.

reign of that prince may perhaps be considered only as a schism among the Mussulmen, which terminated with his life, since immediately after his death, the several provinces that had recognized him, again submitted to the Ommiyans. I therefore avoided assigning him any particular place in history, and thought it would be sufficient to give a full account of the events that related to him, as opportunity should offer, under the reigns of the Ommiyan Caliphs.

MERWAN-EBN-HAKEM.

The NINTH CALIPH.

MERWAN.
Hegyra 64.
Ch. ær. 683.

MERWAN -ebn-Hakem, was the fourth Caliph of the house of Ommiyah, being a collateral branch of the family of Moawiyah the first. That prince (as has been already related) being at Medina at the time of Yezid's death, left the city with great precipitation, on account of a report which was then propagated of a cruel sentence which Abdallah was said to have pronounced against the Ommiyans. He arrived at Damascus at the very juncture when they were much embarrassed by the resolution which Moawiyah the second had taken, of abdicating the throne he had so newly possessed. The reader has already seen, that as the Syrians could not agree in opinion, they

they chose for their regent Dehac, the son MERWAN.
of Kais, a man famous for his abilities, his Hegyra 64.
employments, and especially on account of Ch. ær. 683.
the great services he had done for Moawiyah,
the first founder of the Syrian empire.

But the attachment he had shewn to the Dehac de-
first Caliph of the Ommiyans was not ex- clares for Ab-
tended to all those who belonged to that dallah.
family. Though he loved and honoured the
immediate descendants of Moawiyah, yet
when the crown was about to pass to a col-
lateral branch, he changed his sentiments, and
openly declared for Abdallah-ebn-Zobeir.

Yet, spite of all his intrigues, Merwan
was elected, and took the most speedy mea-
sures to reduce to obedience all such as dis-
puted his authority. Dehac, who expected
such a step on the Caliph's part, was not
wanting on his side. The power he gained
during his regency, had raised him a strong
party, who immediately took up arms under
his conduct. Merwan also levied troops, and
marched out to attack his enemies, who had
taken post in the plains of Damascus.

A single battle put an end to the dispute. He is defeat-
Dehac, the author of it, was killed in the ed, and killed.
action: the greatest part of his troops were
cut in pieces, and the rest totally routed and
dispersed. This compleat victory proved a
solemn confirmation of the choice made of
Merwan to be Caliph: his army proclaimed
him on the field of battle, and brought him
back triumphant to Damascus.

MERWAN.
Hegyra 64.
Ch. ær. 683.

But the pleasure he received on account of so signal a victory was soon abated, when they brought him a list of the number of his enemies that had fallen in the action. That generous and humane prince, grieved at so great an effusion of mussulman blood, could not help crying out, “ Alas! that I, who am an old man, and next to nothing, should be forced to bring armies together to destroy one another!” the slaughter was indeed amazing, but in all probability not so considerable as is related by arabian authors, who say that eighty thousand men were slain in that battle.

Merwan is
obliged to
hold the Caliphate for
Yezid's son.

Merwan returning to Damascus after his victory, went to dwell in the palace where Moawiyah used to reside, and began to contrive the means of establishing his authority. The chief men of the state came there to confer with him on proper measures to be taken for settling the succession to the crown. It had been stipulated, previous to the election, that he should not transmit the government to his posterity, but that on his decease it should devolve of right to Khaled the son of Yezid. And the better to secure the succession, it was thought advisable that Merwan should take to wife Yezid's widow; whereby he would become a kind of guardian to the young prince: and the people entertained so favourable an opinion of his probity, as to be persuaded that he would perform the conditions, and be true to the interest of the orphans.

orphan. Merwan, who had readily subscribed to every article offered, previously to his attaining the throne, made some difficulty in putting on new fetters, by complying with the proposed marriage: however, his friends having urged to him that by such a refusal he would alienate the affections of the Syrians, who would thence conclude that he designed to leave the crown to his own children, to the prejudice of Yezid's posterity, he yielded to their remonstrances, and thereby consented to hold the Caliphate only as a trustee.

MERWAN.
Hegyra 64.
Ch. ær. 683.

However, he endeavoured to establish himself upon the throne, in like manner as if it had been his absolute property. By the death of Dehac, he was freed from a formidable enemy: and in a short time perished another, named Noman-ebn-Bashir, who was governor of Hems. That Mussulman was become a zealous adherent of Dehac; but when he received the news of his defeat, he fled away with his wife and family. The Emeffians, who had at first sided with him, immediately changed their measures; and with a view to regain the Caliph's favour, pursued the fugitives, and having overtaken them, they cut off Noman's head on the spot, and brought his family back prisoners to Hems.

The Emeffians acknowledge Merwan, and put Noman to death.

Merwan, being convinced he had no more to fear from the remains of that faction, resolved to march into Egypt, where his rival Abdallah had a strong party, which was continually

Merwan subdues Egypt.

MERWAN.
Hegyra 64.
Ch. ær. 683.

continually increasing by the great dilligence of Hassan-ebn-Malek his lieutenant. He sent before him Amru-ebn-Said his relation, with a numerous body of troops under his command. That general executed his orders so expeditiously, and with so much success, that at the beginning of the campaign all Egypt was subdued. He drove out Abdallah's lieutenant, and shortly afterwards routed Musab, brother to Abdallah, who came against him with an army to succour Egypt. That victory brought on the total reduction of the people of that country, so that it became unnecessary for Merwan to go thither. Amru returned triumphant to Damascus, to receive the reward due to his bravery.

But whilst Egypt was withdrawing itself from Abdallah-ebn-Zobeir, in order to submit to Merwan, disturbances arose in other provinces, which did not promise a quiet reign to either of the competitors.

Chorasan refuses to declare for either of the competitors to the Caliphate.

The people of Chorasan, who had acknowledged Yezid, refused to side with Merwan; not that they had abated of their attachment to Mussulmanism, but in consequence of a resolution they had formed of remaining neuter, during the continuance of the disputes touching the Caliphate: insomuch that until the Mussulmen should be agreed in choice of an imam, they appointed Salem the son of Ziyad, who was then their governor, to be regent of the country. His regency was undisturbed. Salem, who was naturally

naturally a lover of peace, carried a very even hand between the two Caliphs: and being solely intent on the care of governing the people with prudence and moderation, they respected him to so high a degree, that during the few years of his government, more than twenty thousand children (as arabian writers say) were named Salem, out of pure affection to their governor.

MERWAN.

Hegyra 64.

Ch. ær. 683.

The disturbances that arose in Arabia were of another kind. The Cufians, who were naturally of a fickle disposition, after having by turns embraced and abandoned the party of Ali, had at last (as the reader has been already informed) compleated their treachery, by their conduct towards the unfortunate Houssein, of whose death they were the cause, by refusing the succours they had promised to send him.

A revolt in

Arabia, ex-

cited by the

Cufians.

When they seriously reflected how much they had been wanting, both in point of honour and duty, they were seized with a violent remorse, and began to think of making an attonement, by revenging the death of that unhappy prince on those who had been the authors of it. But before they put their designs into execution, they held many conferences and consultations, to agree on the manner of conducting so important an undertaking.

For that purpose an assembly was held of all the chief of the sect, who were venerable for their rank, years, piety, and experience;

MERWAN.
Hegyra 64.
Ch. ær. 683.

perience; amongst whom appeared Soliman-ebn-Sorad one of the companions of the prophet; Mofabbib-ebn-Nahbah, Ali's most intimate friend; Abdallah-ebn-Saïd, Abdallah-ebn-Wali, and Rephaah-ebn-Shaddad. The conferences there held were a new incitement to the zeal, or rather the fury of the Cufians against the enemies of Ali. Amongst other things, several very pathetical speeches were made, which all tended to demonstrate the baseness of their proceedings in abandoning Houssein; to shew that for their unfaithful dealings towards him, they were condemned and detested by all honest Arabians; and that they could no otherwise wipe off the dishonour, but by commencing and effectually carrying on a war, at the hazard of their lives and fortunes, against the enemies of Ali, Hassan, and Houssein.

This was pretty clearly pointing out the Ommyians, against whom, in fact, they resolved to march forth without delay: and circular letters were sent throughout Arabia, containing their motives to the design, and fixing the number of forces and sums of money which the respective provinces were to raise and furnish for that grand expedition. In those letters were also mentioned the day and place appointed for the rendezvous and muster of the troops. This enterprize, or to speak more properly, this revolt, was called "The holy war:"

a denomination which did not a little contribute to augment the numbers of those that engaged in it. Arabia was all in a flame: nothing was talked of but raising of troops and money; and each man was desirous of contributing to the expence of a war, in which, it was pretended, religion was so deeply concerned.

MERWAN.

Hegyra 64.

Ch ær. 683.

These circular letters were wrote by Soliman-ebn-Sorad, who was looked upon as the life of the enterprize, and the chief promoter of the league. He was also appointed general of the army. But his appointment raised great jealousy, and was strongly opposed by a famous captain named Almoktar, who in the interim arrived at Cufah.

That illustrious Mussulman, who was the son of Obeidah, had distinguished himself in the army from his youth, and bore the marks of many honourable wounds, proofs of his bravery. He had always espoused the party of the Alians; however, he was accused of not having acted with becoming zeal and vigour in behalf of Hassan, during the first campaign which that Caliph made for the support of his authority: but he recovered their esteem, on account of the great pains he took to advance Hossein's interest at the time of the revolt at Cufah. He entertained at his house Muslim, who (as has been already observed) was private agent to Hossein, and he was secretly consulted on all affairs relating to that prince; but

The history

of Almoktar.

MERVAN.
Hegyra 64.
Ch. ær. 683.

but still he acted with so much precaution, that it was a long time before the governor suspected him of being concerned in the conspiracy. At last, Obeidollah having received some information which made him doubt of Almoktar's fidelity, questioned him at their next meeting, touching his secret practices; and the latter having returned a haughty unsatisfactory answer, the governor struck him over the face with his stick, and beat out one of his eyes; after which he committed him to prison, where he was detained until after the death of Houssein.

Yezid, then the reigning prince, having given express orders that he should be set at liberty, Obeidollah obeyed, though with the utmost reluctance: and as he doubted not but Almoktar would seize every opportunity of revenging the injury done him, the governor informed him, that if he was found in the city after the expiration of three days, his head should pay for it.

Almoktar made the best of his way to Hejaz, brooding in his mind the means of taking vengeance for the cruel outrage which Obeidollah had committed on his person. He came in a short time to Mecca, and offered his service to Abdallah; but to his great surprise he did not receive so cordial an answer as he expected. However, he still continued in that city, in expectation that Abdallah would reflect on the matter, and give a more favourable reception to his offer. And he

he often used to say freely to his friends, MERWAN.
 “ Abdallah has more occasion for me, than Hegyra 64.
 I have for Abdallah.” Ch. ær. 683.

Spight of Abdallah’s great indiffence, Al- He offers his
 mkotar staid with him some months. But service to the
 finding that Abdallah did not repose any con- Cufians, as
 fidence in him, nor employ him in any con- commander
 siderable post, he resolved to go to Cufah, as of their forces.
 the time of the plot against the Ommiyans
 was in agitation. As he was informed of
 the situation of the affairs of Ali’s party,
 he found they only wanted a man of their
 own opinion to head them. He therefore
 proposed to go and offer himself for that
 purpose, though he well knew that the Cu-
 fians had appointed Soliman to be their ge-
 neral. But the mean opinion he enter-
 tained of that officer, induced Almoktar
 to believe he should meet with no difficulty
 in supplanting him, and that the command
 would fall to him of course.

But things did not go so smoothly as Al- His contempt
 moktar imagined, and he met with difficul- for Soliman
 ties and oppositions which almost made him raises him up
 despair of success. When he came to Cu- enemies.
 fah, he called the party together, and told
 them, he was come from Mahomet-ben-Ha-
 nifah*, who had commanded him to aid
 them with his council and with his sword.

* Mahomet, the son of Ali, was commonly called Ben Ha-
 nifah, or the son of Hanifah, who was one of Ali’s wives ; in
 order to distinguish him from the other children which Ali had
 by Fatima the prophet’s daughter.

MERWAN.
Hegyra 64.
Ch. ær. 683.

The arrival of so famous a captain at first raised the spirits of the Cufians; but his conduct in regard to Soliman soon created him many enemies. He spoke contemptibly of that general, and represented him as a man unfit for military command, and who wanted both skill and experience to conduct such an enterprize. He confessed, that he was indeed a good politician, and an excellent counsellor: in a word, that he would make a very good figure in the cabinet, but was by no means capable of giving the necessary orders at the head of an army in the heat of battle.

Although there was a great deal of truth in the account given by Almoktar of Soliman's abilities, yet the great interest of that general prevailed, and the Alians, for the most part, supported him in his post; and the time being come for taking the field, Soliman marched for Nochailah, the place appointed for the general rendezvous of the forces.

Almoktar remained at Cufah, not doubting but Soliman would soon commit some essential blunder, which would induce the sect to dismiss that general; and that upon the first loss they would have recourse to him to command the army.

He is accused
of a design to
seize Cufah.

But the continuance of Almoktar in the city gave rise to some suspicions: whether they were well founded or not, Soliman's friends took advantage of them, to propagate a report that Almoktar had a secret design

design of forming a party to seize Cufah, and the whole province. He was taken into custody, and brought before the tribunal of Abdallah-ebn-Yezid, then governor of the place, whom they would have persuaded to send Almoktar to prison bound in chains. The governor alledged, that he ought not to deprive a man of his liberty, who was only taken up on suspicion; but the accusers raised so great a clamour, and were besides so numerous, that the governor was obliged partly to comply with their will. Thus, without any other proof than a tumultuous accusation, Abdallah caused Almoktar to be imprisoned; and all he could do in his behalf was to spare him the shame and trouble of being put in irons, as his enemies had required.

During the tumult which was caused by this affair at Cufah. Soliman had put himself at the head of the troops, and proposed shortly to march in order to attack the Om-miyans in Syria. But when he had reviewed the army, he was filled with surprize: for it was far from being so numerous as he expected to find it. The great ardour shewn by the people to revenge the death of Houssein was all at once abated, insomuch that most of the provinces had sent no troops at all, and others had sent but a small number, in comparison of what they had engaged to provide. It appeared, by examining the rolls, that one province in particular, which had un-

MERWAN.

Hegyra 64.

Ch. ær. 683.

Hegyra 65.

Ch. ær. 684.

The ardent
desire of the
people for war
abates.

MERWAN.
Hegyra 65.
Ch. ær. 684.

dertaken to furnish sixteen thousand men, had sent but four thousand. But that which gave him the greatest uneasiness, was to see the coldness and indifference of the Cufians themselves, who had been the most forward in promoting the taking up of arms. A considerable number of those who had appeared the most active, staid at home, either from the natural fickleness of their disposition, or through the intrigues of Almoktar, who, it was said, had drawn off ten thousand of the Cufians, and prevented them from joining Soliman.

The general, greatly disconcerted at the smallness of the numbers, contrived an expedient which he thought could not fail of succeeding with people of so odd and capricious a disposition, (whose fancies were easily struck with any thing uncommon,) and of procuring him a speedy recruit. He sent messengers forthwith to Cufah, with orders for the Muezins or public cryers, to cry aloud in all the streets, and in the chief mosque, “Vengeance for Houssein.”

Soliman reviews it.

His orders were executed, and produced the desired effect. The cry roused up the Cufians. They, with a kind of madness, ran to arms, and with the utmost precipitation marched to the place of rendezvous. Soliman was a little encouraged at the sight of such a reinforcement: insomuch that with the succours which he still expected to receive from Madayen and Basorah, he reckoned

oned that he should be soon in a condition of marching into Syria. He had already fixed the plan of his operations, which were to open with the massacre of Obeidollah, whom they looked upon as the chief author of Houssein's death; after which he proposed to employ his whole force against the Ommiyans, in hopes of cutting them all off.

MERWAN.
Hegyra 65.
Ch. ær. 684.

But after having waited near a month, he had the mortification to find that the troops they promised to send him would not come. This news, which was bad enough in itself, became still worse by the fatal effects it produced in his army. His troops were discouraged, and more than one thousand soldiers deserted.

Soliman, being apprehensive that this example would spread, resolved to put his troops upon the march, and so to keep them continually employed. In this manner he advanced to the field where Houssein was slain and buried. There he made so pathetick a speech to his army, concerning the death of Houssein, and the misfortunes of the Cussians in being accessory to it, that all the troops fell on their knees, implored god's pardon for the crime they had committed, and made a solemn vow to shed the last drop of their blood, to avenge the death of Houssein, and by that sacrifice to obtain remission from heaven for having so basely abandoned the grandson of the apostle of God.

MERWAN.
Hegyra 65.
Ch. ær. 684.

Soliman was so highly pleased with the disposition and temper of his troops, that he resolved to march forthwith against the enemy, notwithstanding the friendly advice he had received from several persons, and particularly from Abdallah-ebn-Yezid, governor of Cufah, who having dispassionately considered the state of affairs, sent an express to Soliman, begging him not to advance any further, and advising him even to return to Cufah, and wait for a more favourable opportunity. That governor had probably received intelligence of the numerous forces which Merwan was setting on foot ; and in consequence of his information had sent to intreat Soliman not to persevere in an undertaking which must inevitably be unsuccessful, on account of the small force he had under his command.

The general communicated the governor's letter to a council of war ; but he at the same time gave them to understand he strongly suspected that the advice was given with no other view than to employ his forces in behalf of Abdallah-ebn-Zobeir, to whom the governor was a steadfast friend.

The whole council were of the general's opinion, and he immediately wrote an answer to the governor of Cufah, in which he returned him thanks for his kind advice, but told him he could not presume so much as barely to mention to his troops a return to Cufah ; that they were resolutely bent on re-
venging

venging the death of Houssein ; that the event was in the hands of providence, and he could by no means think of restraining their ardour.

MERWAN.

Hegyra 65.
Ch. ær. 684.

Soliman began his march immediately after the departure of the courier, and advanced with his army to Mesopotamia.

Soliman deposes both the Caliphs.

He halted in the plains of Ainwerdah to perform a public ceremony, the celebration of which was the cause of his destruction. He had already proposed to his officers and soldiers to depose the two Caliphs Merwan and Abdallah-ebn-Zobeir, and to place one of Ali's descendants on the throne. The proposal having been accepted with the loudest acclamations, and the most extravagant marks of approbation, he deferred putting it in execution till he had reached the enemy's territories ; the plains of Ainwerdah seemed to him a place proper for his purpose. He therefore caused the troops to encamp, and, regardless of those precautions which prudence required him to take, more especially as he had entered an enemy's country, his whole thoughts were employed on the pompous preparations for a ridiculous ceremony, which was attended with a most fatal catastrophe.

The Syrian army came almost unexpectedly in fight. Obeidollah, who well knew that his death was to be the first step towards executing the bloody design formed against the Ommiyans, had obtained of Merwan the

He is surprised, and defeated by the Syrian army.

MERWAN. command of his forces: and the Caliph
 Hegyra 65. thought he might safely trust his defence in
 Ch. ær. 684. the hands of a man who had so great reasons
 not to spare his enemy.

Obeidollah appearing therefore at the head of his army, at the very time Soliman's troops were in the midst of their mirth and jollity, without observing the least order or discipline, the Syrians were enabled to attack them to great advantage. Though the Arabians were thus surprized, they found means to draw up in battalia, and face their enemies; but they could not long stand their ground against troops who improved their first advantage. The Syrians cut Soliman's troops in pieces; that general himself fell in the action; and none of his army escaped, but such as saved themselves by the great fleetness of their horses.

Merwan
 causes his son
 to be ack-
 knowledged
 his successor.

From the time Merwan had entrusted Obeidollah with the command of the Syrian troops, that Caliph, who relied on the courage and activity of his general, entertained a design of strengthening his interest in Damascus, and securing the advancement of his family: and though he had taken an oath on his accession to the Caliphate to transmit the crown on his death to Khaled, the son of Yezid, yet he now, without scruple, resolved to cause his own son, Abdolmelik, to be proclaimed his lawful successor.

By means of great presents, and of still greater promises, he gained the consent of
 the

the chief nobility of Damascus; and they brought over the people, so that he secured the throne to his son. Khaled was no sooner informed of the design, than he complained to the Caliph, and with the greatest warmth reproached him for his conduct in the presence of the whole court. This so stirred up Merwan's indignation, that he called him bastard. Khaled, touched to the quick at the affront, went and informed his mother of what had passed, and she advised him to take no further notice of it, assuring him that in a short time they should be both sufficiently revenged of Merwan for his gross insults.

And in fact that Caliph did not long survive. Some say he was poisoned; others relate, that Merwan being indisposed one day, and having fallen into a sound sleep, his wife laid a pillow upon his face, and sat on it till he was dead.

Merwan reigned about ten months. His enemies commonly called him by the name of Ebn-Tarid, that is son of the expelled, because Mahomet had banished his father Hakem for divulging a secret. He continued in exile during the reigns of Abubecre and Omar, and his being recalled was objected to Othman as a great crime, insomuch as he thereby took upon him to reverse a sentence which the prophet had pronounced.

A B D O L M E L I K.

The TENTH CALIPH.

ABDOLME-
LIK.

Hegyra 65.
Ch. ær. 684.

Abdolmelik's
indifference
for the Ca-
liphate.

ABDOLMELIK, the son of Merwan, was raised to the throne immediately after his father's death, and was also inaugurated to the government of Syria and Egypt. Authors relate that when he received the news of his proclamation, he was sitting with the Koran on his lap. He received the news with great tranquillity, and even with a kind of indifference. That prince was sensible, that the days of peace and retirement were at an end, and that, immersed in the hurry of affairs which always attend a crown, he could no longer hope to enjoy his beloved amusements, reading and meditation. "Divine book," cried he folding up the Koran, and laying it aside, "I must now take my leave of thee."

He institutes
the pilgrim-
age to Jeru-
salem, instead
of that to
Mecca.

So soon as he had taken possession of the throne, he took proper measures to secure his power, and subdue the rebels, who were still formidable, especially in Arabia, where Abadllah-ebn-Zobeir held out against him, and used his utmost endeavours to maintain his power. Abdolmelik, reflecting that the pilgrimages to Mecca must be prejudicial to his interest, as they furnished an opportunity to his rival of making proselites to his party ;
and

and as people would be insensibly accustomed to see Abdallah perform the functions of a sovereign, he resolved to prohibit those pilgrimages. But as it might prove of dangerous consequence totally to abolish a religious custom, without substituting to it another, capable of amusing the people, he instituted the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and caused the chief mosque to be considerably enlarged, that it might contain a more numerous congregation. Instead of the black stone which the Mussulmen used to go with great devotion to kiss in the Caabah, at Mecca, the Caliph caused Jacob's stone * to be placed in the mosque at Jerusalem. This expedient succeeded to his utmost wish, and the Syrian Mussulmen soon went in crowds to the pilgrimage of Jerusalem, which was so much the more convenient, as the city was at no great distance from them. Besides, as this exercise of devotion had novelty to recommend it, the people performed it with a kind of enthusiastic fervency, and shewed at least as much zeal in going to kiss Jacob's stone, as they had formerly done to kiss the black stone.

Abdolmelik at the same time raised a body of troops, and made other due preparations, as well to oppose the ambitious designs of Abdallah, who was still endeavouring to increase his power, as to baffle the

ABDOLME-
LIK.

Hegyra 65.
Ch. ær. 684.

* See the life of Omar, vol. I. p. 224.

ABDOLME-
LIK.

Hegyra 65.
Ch. ær. 684.

Almoktar is
set at liberty.

He searches
after those
concerned in
Hossein's
death.

Hegyra 66.
Ch. ær. 685.

attempts of Almoktar who had set all Arabia in a flame, with a view to avenge the Alians, and exterminate their enemies.

Almoktar, who had been imprisoned at the request of Soliman's friends, was released so soon as the defeat and death of that general were publicly known. The moment he was at liberty, he resumed his former designs, and put himself at the head of the Alians in order to hunt out all such as had been any way accessory to the death of Hossein.

This disquisition was made with so much heat and fury, that many persons lost their lives who had no share in the death of that prince. They did not stand upon proof; suspicion alone was a sufficient foundation for pronouncing the sentence of death.

The chief victims of that bloody expedition were Shamer, who was said to have let fly the first arrow at Hossein; Caulah, who had carried his head to Obeidollah, and Amer, who commanded the army sent against that prince. The two sons of Amer also perished on that occasion, he caused their heads to be struck off, and sent them to Mahomet-ben-Hanifah, then chief of Ali's family.

He treated with still greater cruelty Adi, the son of Hathem, who was accused of having plundered Hossein on the field of battle: Almoktar caused him to be fled alive. These bloody executions lasted some time

time, and all that could be found to have contributed to the death of Houssein, were destroyed with variety of torments.

ABDOLME-
LIK.

Hegyra 66.
Ch. ær. 685.

But Almoktar was obliged to suspend his executions, in order to provide for his own safety. He had two powerful enemies to deal with, of whom he had equal reason to be afraid. He was threatened by Abdallah who presided in Mecca; and he also well knew that the Caliph had sent out a body of Syrian troops, which were on the point of entering Arabia. They were indeed chiefly destined to attack Abdallah; but there was great reason to fear they would first march into Irak, to destroy the party of the Alians, so formidable to the Caliphs of Syria.

In that juncture Almoktar resolved on writing a letter to Abdallah, in hopes of raising a friend who might act in concert with him against Abdolmelik. He therefore acquainted Abdallah of his having received advice that the Caliph had sent a body of troops to besiege him in Mecca, and assured him that he was ready to march forthwith to his assistance. Abdallah, who had great reason to suspect Almoktar, answered, that he was ready to accept his offer; but it must be on condition, nevertheless, that he would cause his whole army to acknowledge him as Caliph.

Almoktar offers his assistance to Abdallah, who refuses it.

Almoktar, who had no thoughts of complying with such a condition, resolved to act openly against Abdallah, and to endeavour to surprize him. To which intent he sent a body

He sends a body of troops to surprize Abdallah.

LIK.
Hegyra 66.
Ch. ær. 685.

body of troops to Medina, under the command of Serjabil, to whom he gave the necessary orders for carrying his design into execution.

Abdallah having received advice of the step taken by Almoktar, sent also a body of forces to Medina, under the command of Abbas-ebn-Sahel, whom he gave orders closely to watch Almoktar's motions, and to strive to discover his design: to receive his troops in case they appeared ready and willing to serve him against the Syrians, but to destroy them, if he suspected they entertained the least treacherous designs.

Conference
between the
commanders
of the two ar-
mies.

Abbas having marched into the neighbourhood of Medina, met Serjabil, who was also approaching to that city. He had a conference with him, which proved to his satisfaction; for having asked him if he did not own himself to be Abdallah's subject, Serjabil readily answered in the affirmative. But Abbas having proposed to him to join their troops, and march together to Dilkroa, (whither Abdallah had ordered his general to advance to give battle to Abdolmelik's army) Serjabil shewed by his answer that he had not been sincere in acknowledging Abdallah: he declared that his orders were to march only to Medina, and therefore he would not go to any other place, without fresh instructions from Almoktar.

By this refusal of compliance, Abbas violently suspected how the matter was; he
resolved

resolved to destroy Serjabil, and overthrow his troops; however, he concealed his design, and pretending not to be surprized at his answer, he told him, he was much in the right to obey his orders, but that for his own part he must march up to Abdolmelik's army so soon as his troops were a little refreshed.

ABDOLME-
LIK.

Hegyra 66.
Ch. ær. 685.

In the mean time Serjabil was greatly distressed for want of provisions, and Abbas generously sent him as much as he wanted. Plenty being thus suddenly restored to the soldiers, who had been almost starved during their march, they forthwith left their ranks, and ran backwards and forwards for water and other things necessary to dress their provisions.

Abbas sur-
prizes Ser-
jabil's troops,
and cuts them
in pieces.

Abbas perceiving the disorder they were in, seized the opportunity of striking the intended blow. He fell suddenly on Serjabil's men, and made a horrid slaughter of them. The general did all in his power to rally and face the enemy; but he was killed on the spot, and all that were about him were cut in pieces. However, Abbas restrained his men in the heat of the pursuit, and gave quarter to a great number of Serjabil's soldiers, whom he afterwards set at liberty.

When Almoktar heard the news of this terrible defeat, he dispatched forthwith a messenger to Mahomet-ben-Hanifah, who was then at Mecca. He acquainted him with the disaster that had happened, and told

ABDOLME-
LIK.

Hegyra 66.

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told him that as this loss particularly affected the Alians, whose chief he was, so he would enable him speedily to repair it, if he would put himself at the head of a numerous army, which the Cufians had promised to send in a very short time.

Mahomet re-
fuses to pro-
secute his
claim to the
Caliphate.

Mahomet was unmoved at Almoktar's offers. He led a quiet inoffensive life at Mecca with the rest of the Alians his kinsmen; and so far were they from raising any disturbance, that they always persuaded their friends to peace. Mahomet thanked him for the zeal and affection he shewed to his family; but at the same time assured him he had not the least intention of having recourse to arms; that he left the event to God, and until it should please the divine providence to produce something in his favour, he should continue to do that which was good, and eschew that which was evil; that he advised him to do the same, and particularly to abstain from shedding blood.

Almoktar, who expected a very different kind of answer, was greatly perplexed when Mahomet had acquainted him with his resolutions. He did not think fit to communicate to the Cufians the letter he had received; on the contrary he told them, that Mahomet had commanded him to do that which is right, and reject infidelity and perfidiousness. He therefore continued to act of his own authority in an affair in which he was disclaimed by the person who was chiefly

chiefly concerned ; and he assembled a great body of malcontents, who readily joined in raising disturbances under pretence of revenging the death of Hossain, and restoring the Alians to the throne.

ABDOLME-
LIK.

Hegyra 66.
Chr. ær. 685.

Though Abdallah was thoroughly acquainted with the dispositions of Mahomet and his family, and well knew they had no share in the troubles which then reigned in Arabia, he yet thought himself obliged, in point of policy, to sacrifice them for the sake of his own safety. They were indeed quiet themselves ; but on pretence of their right and title, plots were continually forming by ambitious and turbulent men : he therefore cruelly resolved to destroy them.

Abdallah
causes Ma-
homet and
his family to
be seized.

He caused Mahomet-ben-Hanifah and his family, with about seventeen of the principal Cufians, to be seized, and imprisoned in a certain inclosure, where stood the famous well of Zemzem *. He required them to acknowledge him as Caliph within a certain limited time ; and threatened, that in case of their refusal, he would put them to death, and burn their bodies to ashes, so as not the least mark might remain, capable of furnishing a pretext for future commotions.

These menaces were not capable of shaking the constancy of the Alians. Though Ma-

* The Mahometans alledge, that the Zemzem is on the same spot with the spring which the angel discovered to Hagar, when she went into the desert with her son Ishmael.

ABDOLME-
LIK.
Hegyra 66.
Ch. ær. 685.

homet-ben-Hanifah had so much to fear from the fury of Abdallah, yet he preserved his usual tranquillity of mind; and patiently resigning himself to the will of providence, he left the event to heaven. But it was not so with some of his fellow prisoners; they found means to elude the vigilance of the guards, and wrote a letter to Almoktar, in which they acquainted him of their dangerous situation.

Almoktar
sends out
troops to re-
lease them.

That captain instantly took measures to set them at liberty, and he ordered the troops he sent out for that purpose to march in small detachments one after the other, as well to avoid suspicion, as on account of the conveniency of the soldiers on their route. At the head of these detachments he placed an officer of distinction called Abu-aljodali, who pressed on with the utmost speed towards Mecca, having with him only seventy horse; but they were all men of approved valour. When he was assured that the several bodies had reached the places appointed for them to halt, and that they could easily and speedily join him on the first signal, he advanced to attack the inclosure of the Zemzem, where the Alians were kept prisoners.

And they arrived there very opportunely, for the time limited by the son of Zobeir was almost expired. Abdallah had received intelligence that a body of troops were preparing to force the inclosure of the Zemzem; but when he was acquainted with the small-
ness

ness of their numbers, he despised them; and thought the guard would be sufficient to repulse them. And they behaved very resolutely, insomuch that Aljodali feigned a retreat, and came to the place where he could give the appointed signal to the other detachments who lay there in ambuscade. The whole body having joined their commander, Aljodali made a fresh attack, and fell on so furiously, that the guard could not withstand it. He was on the point of entering the inclosure of the Zemzem, but Mahomet ran out and entreated him not to suffer so sacred a place to be polluted with Mussulman blood on his account.

ABDOLME-
LIK.

Hegyra 66.
Ch. ær. 685.

In the mean time Abdallah arriving to sustain the guard, threatened Aljodali that if he did not retire with his troops, he would instantly cut them in pieces. But Aljodali, flushed with his first advantage, boldly answered, that if all the prisoners in the Zemzem were not forthwith released, he would fall on the Meccans, and destroy them to a man. And Abdallah not seeming disposed to comply, the order for the attack was given; his troops were defeated, and he himself was taken prisoner.

Abdallah's
troops are de-
feated, and
he is taken
prisoner.

The Meccans having sallied out in defence of Abdallah, the combat had like to have been renewed with greater fury than before, when Mahomet-ben-Hanifah interposed, and by means of gentle intreaties, at last prevailed on the generals to restrain the troops:

Abdallah and
Mahomet are
set at liberty.

ABDOLME-
LIK.

Hegyra 66.
Ch. ær. 685.

and the tumult being a little appeased, they held a conference, and entered into an accommodation; in consequence of which Abdallah was set at liberty, and Mahomet with his family and friends were permitted to depart from Mecca.

Almoktar
sends out
troops against
the army of
Abdolmelik.

Whilst Almoktar, by the assistance of his generals, was thus extricating the Alians from the difficulties and dangers they laboured under, he was himself greatly perplexed by the arrival of Abdolmelik's army, which was making forced marches towards Cufah, under the command of Obeidollah.

However, far from being discouraged at sight of the impending danger, he was animated the more, and even infused a portion of his spirit into the Cufians, who, with the utmost ardour, took up arms against him, whom they looked upon to be the murderer of Hossein. Almoktar appointed Ibrahim ben-Alashtar to be their general, and to prevent Obeidollah from advancing to Cufah, he ordered Ibrahim to march with all speed, and to give him battle.

The Syrians
are defeated.

His orders were executed with the utmost success. Ibrahim came up with Obeidollah in the plains at some distance from Cufah, and brought on an action, in which the Cufians performed prodigies of valour. The Syrian troops, unable to withstand such furious attacks, were totally routed: a great number fell in the field of battle, and were killed in the pursuit, and a still greater number perished

in

in attempting to ford a river. Obeidollah was taken prisoner during the heat of the action, and was soon doomed to die. They dealt out to him the same measure as he had dealt to Houssein; they cut off his head on the field of battle, and forthwith sent it to Almoktar, who was then at the castle of Cufah. Thus fell that implacable enemy of the Alians, who, as well on account of his enthusiastic notions in religion, as of his cruel dealings, was held in utter detestation by all such as had the least regard to the memory of Houssein.

ABDOLME-
LIK.

Hegyra 66.
Ch. ær. 685.

Obeidollah is
beheaded.

The death of Obeidollah was not sufficient to satisfy the vengeful designs of Almoktar against the enemies of the house of Ali: he commanded a fresh search to be made in Cufah and the adjacent places, and wherever any of them were discovered, he put them to death without mercy. The people highly complained of these barbarities, and being enraged at the sight of so much bloodshed, the same Cufians who had marched under his colours with a courage bordering on frenzy, were the first to complain of his tyranny and barbarity.

Hegyra 67.
Ch. ær. 686.

Almoktar
raises the in-
dignation of
the Cufians
by his cruel-
ties.

Musab-ebn-Zobeir having been sent by his brother Abdallah to Basorah, the Cufians applied to him for assistance and redress. Musab, who was well pleased to find an opportunity of repaying the injuries which Almoktar had done to Abdallah, promised that he would march out against him so

They prevail
on Musab to
take up arms
against him.

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Hegyra 67.
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soon as he could assemble a body of forces sufficient for that undertaking.

In consequence of this resolution he wrote to Mohalleb, who was his lieutenant over Persia, commanding him to come forthwith and join him with supplies of men and money; and Mohalleb obeying the summons, they joined their forces and marched towards Cufah.

Almoktar is
defeated.

Almoktar was no sooner informed of that step, than he marched out of the city at the head of his forces, flattering himself that he should get the better of Musab with the same ease as he had subdued Obeidollah; but things took a different turn. The two armies met, and a bloody action ensued, in which both parties fought not only with the utmost bravery, but even with a kind of obstinate fury. The victory was long doubtful; but at last Almoktar's troops gave ground, and were thrown into disorder. That general used his utmost efforts to rally them, but without success: and finding it impossible longer to make head against an enemy, whose courage seemed to increase in proportion to the advantages they gained, he retreated with his best troops into the castle of Cufah.

He is besieged
in the castle
of Cufah, and
killed in an
attack.

Musab pursued him, and laid siege to the place. Almoktar, by his valour and activity, animated his soldiers, who made a most gallant defence. Even the want of provisions did not abate their courage, and they sustained famine, and resisted the attacks of the enemy, with

with equal resolution. But at last Almoktar ABDOLME-
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Hegyra 67.
Ch. ær. 686. having been killed in an attack, his loss drew on that of the place, and the garrison surrendered at discretion.

Mufab made a cruel use of his victory; he put the whole garrison, which amounted to about seven thousand men, to the sword.

But this piece of vengeance was far from equalling the cruelties executed by Almoktar on all such as he knew or suspected to be enemies to the house of Ali. He never pardoned one of them; and authors assert, that he destroyed more than fifty thousand men, without reckoning such as were slain in the several battles he fought. He was killed in the 67th year of the Hegyra, and was then 67 years old.

The defeat of Almoktar would have been a lucky event for Abdolmelik, had not his rival Abdallah been the occasion of it. For though by that victory they were both freed from a very enterprizing foe, yet it was of infinitely greater advantage to Abdallah, who having thus got rid of such an enemy, was in a much better condition of extending his power in Arabia, and even of making attempts beyond the frontiers of that province.

Abdolmelik, therefore, having no other Hegyra 68.
Ch. ær. 687. means left but to join all his forces in order to subdue so potent a competitor, made the utmost preparations for marching into Arabia; Famine in
Syria. but his designs were rendered abortive by a terrible famine which then raged in Syria:

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Hegyra 68.
Ch. ær. 687.

and the distempers which usually attend it carried off so great a number of men, that Abdolmelik was not in a condition, at least during that year, of engaging in any considerable enterprize.

Hegyra 69.
Ch. ær. 688.

Amru revolts
from the Ca-
liph.

The next year the Caliph put himself at the head of his troops, with a design to attack Abdallah's army, which was still commanded by Musab his brother, the conqueror of Almoktar. When Abdolmelik departed from Damascus, he appointed Amru the son of Said to be governor of that capital; but so soon as the Caliph was marched to a considerable distance, Amru began to cabal, and formed a strong party, by means of which he made himself master of that city.

The insurrec-
tion is sup-
pressed.

So soon as Abdolmelik received advice of this treasonable act, he returned to Damascus, and at his arrival saw to how high a pitch Amru had carried his disobedience. That rebel appeared at the head of a body of troops ready to oppose the Caliph. And the latter preparing to reduce him by force, the Damascenes were on the point of cutting each others throats, but the women ran out with their children in their arms, and throwing themselves between the contending parties, with loud cries earnestly supplicated both the Caliph and Amru not to shed the blood of Mussulmen, but rather to unite in opposing the common enemies of the nation. Amru, being moved both at their cries and remonstrances, and having also reflected on the rashness

rashness of his undertaking, consented to lay down his arms: and some Syrian lords having undertaken to suppress the insurrection, Abdolmelik consented to an accommodation, without seeming to require the least reparation for the outrage which Amru had committed against him.

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Ch. ær. 688.

But standing in competition for a crown is a crime never to be forgiven; and in a few days Abdolmelik sent for Amru, saying, he had something to communicate to him. At the time he received the message, he was in company of his wife and a few friends, who dissuaded him from trusting himself in the Caliph's hands. But he would not listen to their advice; he even refused to take any weapon with him, or even to be accompanied by any guard: but having stumbled as he went out at the door of his house, he thought it was a bad omen; he therefore returned, girt on his sword, and put on private armour, and he also consented that about one hundred of his friends should attend him to Abdolmelik's house, which they performed accordingly.

Treachery of
the Caliph to-
wards Amru.

When he had passed the first gate of the palace, it shut upon his men, and none permitted to go in with him, but a young domestick. He certainly had great reason to consider this event as a much more sinister omen than his having stumbled at the door of his house; however, it is not said that he took

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any notice of it: he went on, and entered the Caliph's apartment.

That prince gave him a most gracious reception; he placed Amru on the same couch whereon he sat himself, and spoke to him with great civility and seeming cordiality. After a pretty long conversation, he ordered one of his servants to take off Amru's sword, and he seeming unwilling to part with it; "What," said Abdolmelik to Amru, "Do you so wrongfully suspect me as to sit in my presence with your sword on, and especially when you see I am unarmed?"

Amru seemed a little disconcerted at these words of the Caliph, however he complied, and gave up his sword. The next moment Abdolmelik turning towards him, and viewing him with great disdain, told him, that when he was first informed of his revolt, he had made an oath, that if he ever got him into his power, he would put him in chains. In vain did Amru beseech the Caliph to consider that he had voluntarily put himself into his hands, and that so unreserved a conduct seemed to entitle him to be treated with more humanity: but Abdolmelik drew the fetters from under his cushion, and caused them to be fixed on his hands and feet.

The Caliph, not content with the mortifying condition to which he had reduced so famous a captain as Amru, insulted him still farther by blows, and dragged him so violently

violently against a couch, that he beat out two of his fore teeth, which fell on the ground. Some authors assert, that the Caliph taking up the two teeth in his hand, and shewing them to Amru, said to him, " I am sure, from what has happened, that there will never be a sincere reconciliation between us." From that moment he resolved to strike his head off, and the muezin having at the same time called to evening prayer, the Caliph went to the mosque, and left the execution of Amru to his brother Abdolaziz, the son of Merwan.

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Abdolaziz was preparing to execute the base office he was appointed to perform, but Amru seeing him approach with his drawn sword, told him with great mildness, that he hoped he would not dishonour himself by committing so odious an action, and entreated him to refer the perpetration of it to some other person, who was not so nearly related to him. Abdolaziz was so moved at this representation, and the intended fact appeared to his imagination in such odious colours, that he threw away his sword, and left the room.

When Abdolmelik returned from the mosque, he was surprized to find Amru still alive. He therefore resolved to be the executioner of his own sentence; he called for a lance, and therewith struck his enemy a violent blow, but it did not penetrate. He repeated the stroke but without effect, for

Amru is killed by the Caliph.

Amru

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Amru had a coat of mail under his garment; which Abdolmelik perceiving, he said with a malignant smile; "I see, cousin, you come well prepared!" He then called for his sword, and having commanded Amru to be thrown on his back, he killed him with his own hand.

But the Caliph was at the same instant seized with such a trembling, that he fell on the body of Amru unable to rise again. His servants soon came to his assistance, and laid him upon his couch, where he continued some time before he could recover himself.

The death of
Amru causes
a sedition.

Whilst these things were passing in the palace, a disturbance arose abroad on account of Amru. It was observed that he did not attend the Caliph to prayers. In a short time their suspicions increased; and it was at last rumoured that the Caliph had either killed him, or kept him prisoner.

Upon this, John, Amru's brother, took with him some of his friends, and a considerable number of slaves, and went at their head to the palace to demand his brother. Being denied entrance, he broke open the gates, and killed several of the guards. The Caliph soon assembled men enough to repulse the mutineers, but that it might be done with less danger, he caused Amru's head to be thrown out of the window, to satisfy them that all their efforts to save that Mussulman would be useless. He also ordered some of his people to throw out plenty of money, to amuse

amuse and employ the slaves; and in the mean time his guards beat off John and his friends, who pressing on, and killing and wounding all they met, were attempting to force their way into the interior part of the palace. In this rencounter, John was taken prisoner, and sentenced to have his head struck off on the spot. But Abdolaziz entreated the Caliph to defer the execution, that he might not be reproached with having in the same day put to death two of his cousins who were of the Ommiyan family.

The Caliph yielded to his brother's intreaty, and sent John to prison, together with such of his friends as they had seized, for being concerned in the insurrection. They continued in confinement about a month, at which time the Caliph held a council to decide their fate. He was for putting them to death; but the major part of the council having represented to him, that those people being almost all his near relations, it would be better to give them their liberty, on condition, however, that they should quit Damascus. This advice took place; the Caliph banished John and his friends, without appointing any place of exile; he permitted them to go where they thought fit, even to Musab-ebn-Zobeir his enemy, but they were at the same time informed, that if they bore arms in Musab's service, and should happen to be taken prisoners, they would be treated as rebels.

John

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John and his friends, little expecting to be treated so mercifully, with great joy complied with the sentence of banishment, and retired into Irak to Musab-ebn-Zobeir, who was still in arms to support the rights of his brother Abdallah against the attempts of Abdolmelik.

Hegyra 70.
Ch. ær. 689.

Abdolmelik
treats with the
Greeks.

That Caliph endeavoured to establish his power in Arabia, notwithstanding the great credit and interest which the two sons of Zobeir had gained in that province, which proved great obstacles to his design. To this intent he resolved to negotiate a treaty of accommodation with the Greeks, who had made an incursion into Syria. Abdolmelik, not being able to face them, and at the same time effectually continue the war in Arabia, chose to treat with the grecian emperor, who consented to retire, in consideration of the sum of fifty thousand ducats, which the Caliph agreed to pay him yearly.

But this accommodation was far from being easily brought about, almost all the whole 70th year of the Hegyra being employed in concluding it. So soon as that important affair was ended, Abdolmelik, having no more to fear from the Greeks, was solely employed in preparations for the war in Arabia, which however he could not prosecute till the 71st year of the Hegyra.

Hegyra 71.
Ch. ær. 690.

As he had formed a resolution of marching in person, and heading his troops, he put to death all those that had been concerned
in

in the revolt with Amru. In a short time he was ready to begin his march, but the Syrian nobility did not approve of his engaging in this expedition, and strongly opposed it; though they at the same time agreed it was absolutely necessary the war should be carried on in Arabia. They wisely remonstrated to him, that it was to be feared many malecontents were still left, who might take advantage of his absence to raise disturbances in the capital. Besides, as the event of war was very uncertain, they urged the great grief he must feel in case he should be defeated; and to what danger the Ommiyans in general would be exposed, if he should be killed or made prisoner.

To this the Caliph answered, that though their reasons were very strong, yet he could not follow their advice, since the war in Arabia must be managed in a particular kind of manner. He obligingly told them, that if no more had been necessary than to place at the head of the army a general of consummate bravery and experience, he should have met with no difficulty in finding many such in Syria, and he would then with great pleasure have yielded to their request: but added he, in order to attack Musab with success, arms and military skill alone will not suffice; cunning, artifice, and subtilty must be put in practice; in which respect I cannot well rely on any other person, and therefore my presence is absolutely necessary, for I shall

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He makes
preparations
for marching
against Ab-
dallah.

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shall then see all that passes with my own eyes; and shall be able to make the most of all advantages that offer.

Abdolmelik therefore shortly began his march to join the main body of his army, at the place of general rendezvous. He had sent before him one of his captains, named Khaled-ebn-Afid, and other emissaries, to Basorah, with orders to endeavour to form a party there, and bring over to his interest some of Musab's chief friends. He had in the mean time wrote several letters to the leading men, and particularly to Ibrahim-ben-Alashtar, full of large promises in case they would join him; but Ibrahim remained faithful to Musab. He even delivered to him the Caliph's letter sealed up, for he had not deigned to open it, not doubting but that it contained proposals which would not quadrate with his way of thinking; and indeed Abdolmelik promised him no less than the government of Irak, if he would come over to his party.

The Caliph
meets the
enemy, and
defeats them.

Abdolmelik received no answer from Ibrahim; but he received advice that Musab was making hasty marches towards him, with intent to give him battle. The Caliph went out against him with the greater confidence, as he was at the same time informed that Omar-ebn-Abdallah, and Mohalleb were not then with Musab. Abdolmelik dreaded the presence of those two officers, who were men of great courage and conduct. When he found therefore that they were
absent,

absent, he said to his generals, "I think I may depend upon gaining the victory, as Musab will have nobody to help him."

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The two armies joined battle at a place called Masken, and the action began almost as soon as they arrived there. Ibrahim-ebn-Alashtar, Musab's faithful friend, gave the first charge on the Syrians, and fought with great bravery; but he was repulsed by Mahomet-ebn-Haroun, an adversary of equal bravery. Ibrahim renewed the attack and did wonders, and his valour at last proved fatal to him; for having exposed himself with the utmost intrepidity, he was killed on the spot.

The loss of the general brought on the destruction of Musab's army; the horse took to flight, the Irakians abandoned him, so that a total rout seemed inevitable. Musab amazed to find himself so deserted, could not tell what was the cause of his misfortune: but he no longer doubted when he heard that Ibrahim was killed. He cried out in a fit of despair, "O Ibrahim! but there is no Ibrahim for me to day!" He strove however to conceal his grief, and used his utmost efforts to encourage and rally his troops. Perceiving his forlorn condition, he was desirous of saving his son Issa from the danger. Issa, though but fifteen years old, had behaved with all the bravery of a veteran. Musab persuaded him to go to Mecca with the utmost speed, and acquaint his uncle Abdallah-

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lah-ebn-Zobeir with the perfidiousness of the Irakians ; but Issa would not leave him. That young Mussulman advised his father to attempt a retreat to Basorah, in the best order he could, and remonstrated to him that it was the most likely expedient for retrieving his losses, which would be impossible, should he, in the present situation of affairs, obstinately persist in making head against the enemy : but Musab, who looked upon a retreat to be dishonourable, answered him, “ No, my son, it shall never be said amongst the Coreish; that I took a step which so nearly resembles a flight.” He therefore returned to the charge with such of his troops as had the courage to follow him ; and his son Issa threw himself into the thickest of the battle, to conquer, or rather to die with his father.

It is said that during the engagement Abdolmelik (who highly honoured and esteemed his enemy, on account of the gallant resistance he made) sent to Musab, and offered quarter to him, and the remains of his troops, if he would surrender. But Musab, though reduced to the last extremity, boldly answered, “ That such men as he did not use to quit the field, till they were conquerors or vanquished.” The battle was therefore continued, but it was of no long continuance. Musab fell in this last attempt, his son having been first slain before his eyes. The remains of his troops were soon dispersed,

ed, and the Caliph gained as compleat a victory as he could wish.

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So soon as this battle was over, Cufah opened its gates to the conqueror, and all Irak made their submission to him. The Caliph signalized his entrance into the capital by acts of clemency and generosity. He pardoned John, (Amru's brother) though he merited death for having joined Musab, after he had been set at liberty by Abdolmelik. John, out of gratitude, took the oath of allegiance to the Caliph, and heartily engaged in his service.

The province
of Irak sub-
mits to the
Caliph.

The Caliph having been informed of the great straits to which the Cufians were reduced, he brought a great quantity of provisions with him, which he caused to be distributed amongst the people. He also made a splendid entertainment at the castle of Cufah, to which he invited the chief officers and persons of note in the city. At this time and place Musab's head was brought to the Caliph by a Syrian soldier, the man who had killed that general in the late engagement. Abdolmelik offered him one thousand ducats as a reward; but the soldier (with a greatness of soul uncommon amongst men of his rank) refused the gift, saying, "That he did not kill Musab in hopes of a reward, but to revenge his own particular quarrel."

When Musab's head was brought to the castle, an observation was made by an old

Superstition of
Abdolmelik.

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officer then present amongst others, which greatly moved the Caliph. He said, he very well remembred that was the third head which had been brought thither. That he had seen the head of Hossein presented to Obeidollah, Obeidollah's to Almoktar, and the head of Musab to Abdolmelik. Though no reflections were made on this observation, it sunk deep into the Caliph's mind: he looked on it as a presage to some misfortune ready to befall him in that place, and in order to avert the ill omen, he not only departed from the castle, but commanded it to be forthwith demolished.

Abdallah harangues the Meccans on the death of Musab.

The news of Musab's death having soon reached Mecca, Abdallah-ebn-Zobeir, his brother, (who greatly deplored his loss) made a speech on the occasion to the people of that city. In this harangue he highly commended Zobeir their father, and set before them the virtues, piety, and great achievements of that illustrious Mussulman. He concluded his discourse in a manner likely to prejudice the Meccans in his favour. After having exaggerated the base and perfidious dealings of the Irakians, and in particular of the men of Cufah, he, by way of contrast, expatiated on the noble and unshaken fidelity of the inhabitants of Mecca, who had fought with so great perseverance in defence of the truth. He assured them he should always entertain a grateful sense of their generous dealings with him; and as it

was

was probable that the Syrian troops would soon lay siege to Mecca, he vowed that if he could not repulse them, he would lose his life at the head of his beloved Meccans.

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Chr. ær. 690.

But whilst these people were daily giving fresh proofs of their attachment to Abdallah, Abdolmelik's party was gaining strength in the other parts of Arabia. So soon as Mohalleb, who was Musab's lieutenant, heard of his general's death, he came and took the oath of allegiance to the Caliph, and the submission of that officer proved a very valuable acquisition to him.

That captain was then employed in quelling the disorders committed by the Azarakites in several provinces of Arabia. The Azarakites were a branch of the Motazeli, and, like them, refused to submit to any authority, either spiritual or temporal. They had kept the field about three years, and committed all kinds of outrages and cruelty. For a long time Mohalleb had frequently come to blows with them; but the actions that had happened were far from being decisive, and the small advantages he gained, had only enabled him to prevent them from extending themselves so far as they proposed to do.

The Azara-
kites revolt.

The death of Musab gave them time to breathe, and even to recover new strength, by means of the resolution which Mohalleb had taken of submitting to the Caliph. The homage of so famous a captain met

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Hegyra 71.
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with a gracious reception ; and Abdolmelik had taken care, at the time he disposed of several great posts to the chief men of his court, that the new convert should not repent the step he had taken. He gave to Basfar, one of his brothers, the government of Cufah ; Khaled had that of Basorah, and Mohalleb was appointed lieutenant of Ehwarz, which is part of Kufistan, and he was besides superintendant of the taxes raised in that province.

Hegyra 72.
Ch. ær. 691.
The Azarakites defeat the Caliph's troops.

In a short time Abdolmelik returned to Syria. The war against the Azarakites was again taken in hand, and Khaled was appointed to carry it on. He sent his brother Abdolaziz against them at the head of a body of troops : but the event was far from justifying his choice of a general. Abdolaziz was totally defeated, and his wife, who accompanied him in the expedition, was taken prisoner. The capture of this woman, who was very beautiful, raised great disputes among such of them as claimed a right to her ; and one of their chiefs, being greatly displeased that a serious quarrel should arise on such an account, to end the dispute struck off her head.

The Caliph
upbraids Khaled.

Abdolaziz, who was excessively grieved, as well at his defeat, as the loss of what he held so dear, had the additional mortification to find, that the misfortune was attributed solely to him. The Caliph plainly told Khaled so in a letter he wrote in answer to

to one sent him by the latter, with the particulars of the last fatal battle. Abdolmelik blamed him for having trusted the command of the troops to a person of so little experience. He asked him what was become of Mohalleb, and why he did not think of employing a captain so renowned for his penetrating judgment, and for his courage and skill in the art of war. He concluded his letter with recommending it to him to recruit his troops, that he might again march out against the Azarakites without delay; and he at the same time enjoined Khaled not to undertake any enterprize against them, without having previously consulted Mohalleb.

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Hegyra 72.
Ch. ær. 691.

Khaled was not a little mortified at the order which the Caliph had given him; however, he complied with it, and sent to Mohalleb to come and join him without delay. They concerted together such measures as were proper to be taken in order to oppose the rebels with success, and their forces being ready, they began their march to meet the enemy.

They came up with the Azarakites near the city of Ehwas, to which place they had advanced. Mohalleb, observing that the enemy had a considerable number of ships on the river, proposed to make himself master of them; but the enemy prevented him, and set them on fire, that they might not be made use of by the Caliph's

The Azara-
kites are bea-
ten.

ABDOLME-
LIK.

Hegyra 72.
Ch. ær. 691.

troops against them. They then strengthened themselves in their intrenchments, where they continued near twenty days, spight of all the attempts that were made to draw them to battle. At last they marched out of their strong hold, and one of the most bloody engagements ensued, that had been seen in the memory of man. The Azarakites, after having stood the attacks of their enemies with the utmost bravery, were at last forced to give ground, and soon were put to a total rout. Some troops were sent in pursuit, who made a terrible slaughter of all they could come up with, and followed the rest even into Persia.

This victory, together with the other advantages Abdolmelik had gained, enabled him to make preparations for subduing Abdallah the son of Zobeir, the only enemy that held out against him. That stout Musfulman still maintained himself on the throne of Mecca, where he assumed the title of Caliph, and seemed resolved not to part with it whilst he lived.

Hejage solicits the command of the army against Abdallah.

Abdolmelik therefore joined all his troops in a body, in order to attack his rival, and gave the command of his army to Hejage, one of the most eloquent, as well as warlike captains amongst the Arabians. He had solicited that command of the Caliph, and promised him success in the enterprize on account of a dream. “One night,” said he to Abdolmelik, “I dreamed that I had taken
the

the son of Zobeir, and flayed him ; therefore commit the management of the war to me, and I will forfeit my head if I do not bring him to you dead or alive.”

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The boldness and resolution which Hejage shewed in his request to march against Abdallah, appeared to the Caliph a good omen of success in the enterprize : he readily conferred on him the command of his troops. Hejage made the most speedy preparations for his march to Mecca, and in order to convince the inhabitants of that city how little he feared them, he sent them a letter couched in the following terms :

“ These are to inform you, that I am about to lay siege to your city. I will not leave your walls till I am master of the place. If you think fit to offer reasonable terms, I will listen to them. I know you are under the tyrannical government of Abdallah, who is bent on preserving his title till he dies, though he should be buried under the ruins of your city. Think of your safety.”

The letter
which he sent
to the Mec-
cans.

Hejage having sent away this letter, began his march in a short time at the head of his troops. Abdallah, on his part, made preparations to oppose him : but being unwilling to wait till Hejage arrived in the neighbourhood of Mecca, he sent out several detachments of cavalry to harass the Syrians in their march. Upon this, frequent skirmishes happened between the parties, in

ABDOLME-
LIK.

Hegyra 72.
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He besieges
Mecca.

The Syrian
troops are
discouraged.

He removes
their fears.

which great courage and resolution were shewn on both sides; however, the Meccan troops were generally worsted. These advantages did not prevent the Syrian general from collecting, during his march, some considerable reinforcements, which were furnished by the governors of some of the provinces, in pursuance of the Caliph's orders.

Hejage being provided with so large a body of troops, set down before Mecca, and invested the place. He soon began his attacks with great fury, but without success, on account of the gallant defence made by Abdallah's troops. The siege continued eight months, and the Syrians had been able to make so little progress, that they began to murmur at the excessive fatigue they were forced to sustain. And indeed the weather was become so tempestuous, that the soldiers, who were exposed to its inclemency, could no longer bear it: but it was still worse when a dreadful storm of thunder and lightning came on, and lasted many days, by which twelve of the Syrian soldiers were killed.

By that accident their courage was entirely sunk. They were persuaded that heaven disapproved their undertaking, and that the death of those twelve soldiers was a sure preface of what would befall the rest, if they obstinately continued the siege.

Hejage was much disturbed at this event; not that he was so weak or ignorant as to believe

believe the thunder was any more than the effect of a natural cause : but the question was, how to undeceive and encourage his terrified troops, which was no easy task. Happily for him, the next day another storm arose, and the lightning killed some of Abdallah's men. Hejage did not miss so fair an opportunity : " You see," said he to his soldiers, " that the lightning does not spare your enemies any more than you. But the difference between you is, that you are obedient to God, and they disobedient." This short harangue had its effect, and the Syrians renewed their attacks with fresh vigour.

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Hegyra 72.
Ch. ær. 691.

But what chiefly contributed to their marching up boldly to the enemy, was the intelligence they received of the great confusion which prevailed in the city. Abdallah's troops began to desert, his friends abandoned him, and even his two sons, Hamzah and Hobeid, came to the camp and demanded a conference with Hejage, in order to procure conditions for themselves.

Abdallah is
abandoned by
his two sons.

Abdallah, who was almost worn out by the fatigues he had sustained during so long a siege, was utterly dejected to see himself thus abandoned on all sides, and on the point of being forced to yield to the enemy. One person alone strove to rouse his courage : it was his mother, a woman of an undaunted spirit, and remarkable for her great zeal and devotion. She was grand-daughter to the

Hegyra 73.
Ch. ær. 692.

Abdallah's
mother
encourages
him to hold
out.

ABDOLME-
LIK.

Hegyra 73.

Chr. ær. 692.

illustrious Caliph Abubecre, and her conduct had been always suitable to her noble birth.

That couragious woman, though then ninety years old, had preserved all her senses, and had still a noble resolution of mind superior to all events. She had been consulted in all matters relating to the defence of Mecca ; but she redoubled her care when she found her son in so desparing a condition. She accompanied him to the ramparts of the city ; she caused refreshments to be brought, which she distributed to him, and also to the soldiers that defended the breach. Her presence, her assistance, and her councils, for some time kept up the courage of the Meccans ; but the defection of so many of the principal officers as daily deserted to the enemy was a terrible blow, which deprived the general of all resolution and judgment.

He imparted to his mother the terrible situation he was reduced to ; and being sensible that with the few troops he had left he could not long oppose the enemy, he asked her if it would not be advisable to surrender, that he might obtain the better conditions.

She strongly opposed the design, and told her son, that by surrendering to save his life, he would become the scorn of the boys of the Ommyan family, and that he could no otherwise merit esteem, than by persevering in the right to the last moment.

“ It

“It is better to die,” said she, “than to neglect one’s duty.”

ABDOLME-
LIK.

Hegyra 73.
Ch. ær. 692.

The courage and resolution of Abdallah seemed to be on a sudden restored by the discourse of his mother; and when she had made an end of speaking, he warmly assured her, that the generous sentiments she had then expressed, were the same as he had entertained to that very day; that he was not fond of the world, or desirous of life; and that zeal to religion and the honour of God, were the only motives to his rising up against the Caliph. He added, that he was resolved to die, rather than accept any terms from the enemy. He begged her not to grieve immoderately at an event, which he knew would rend her heart, spight of her great resignation to the will of God: but that she would reflect that her son had never walked in the ways of the wicked, nor done any thing for which he could be justly reproached. “O God! thou knowest,” said he, “that I do not say this in my own justification, but that my mother may be comforted after my death.”

He would then have instantly gone to the ramparts, at once to put an end to his life and exploits; but before he departed she gave him a draught with musk, to increase his courage. She assured him, that if he was killed in fight, he would die a martyr. Abdallah answered, that he was not in the least afraid of death, but he was apprehensive of being

ABDOLME-
LIK.

Hegyra 73.
Ch. ær. 692.

Abdallah is
killed in an
attack.

being afterwards exposed to the insults of his enemies; to which she courageously replied, “The sheep, when once killed, does not feel the flaying:” upon which she dismissed him.

Abdallah therefore went out to oppose the enemy; and encouraging his troops, he put himself at their head, and made such a bold attack on the enemy as greatly amazed them. He killed a great number with his own hand, and by the assistance of the troops that accompanied him, he repulsed and even overthrew, in the ditch of the town, all the troops that came to support the first body. But at last the great multitude of assailants obliged him to retreat in his turn; and the enemy gaining ground, step by step, the brave Abdallah still faced them, and slew many more before he was surrounded. That great man had now no weapons left but his sword and lance, however he still held out some time. He retired to a part of Mecca, where he could be attacked only in front, and defended himself, to the terror and astonishment of his enemies. The Syrian soldiers, not daring to approach him, and having no more arrows to shoot at a distance, they threw at him bricks, tiles, and stones, and whatever else they could find, till they made him stagger. It is related, that when he felt the blood trickle down his face and beard, he repeated this verse of an arabian poet: “The blood of our wounds doth not fall down upon our heels,

heels, but upon our feet:" meaning that he had not turned his back upon his enemies. ABDOLME-
LIK.

At last, after having defended himself as long as he could, he sunk under the blows of the Syrians, who fell on him, put an end to his life, and cut off his head. The news of his death was instantly carried to Hejage, who fell down and worshipped. Hegyra 73.
Ch. ær. 692.

Thus fell the famous Abdallah, after having borne the title of Caliph in Mecca full nine years. Historians praise him upon account of his courage, but they at the same time agree that he was excessively avaricious; which gave rise to a common saying amongst the Arabians, "That before Abdallah-ebn-Zobeir, there never was a valiant man but he was also liberal."

After the death of Abdallah, and the surrender of Mecca, all Arabia, except some small bodies of rebels, submitted to the Caliph of Syria, and took the oaths of allegiance to him in the presence of Hejage.

That general employed the following year in establishing Abdolmelik's authority; and in order to gain him the affections of the people, he resolved to put things at Mecca on the same foot they had been during the prophet's time. He therefore pulled down all the buildings which Abdallah had added to the chief mosque, and restored it to the form it was in before Mahomet's days. This change gave great satisfaction to a number of devout Mussulmen, and pilgrimages Hegyra 74.
Ch. ær. 693.
Hejage re-
news the pil-
grimage to
Mecca.

ABDOLMÉ-
LIK.

Hegyra 74.
Ch. ær. 693.

He causes the
rest of the
rebels to sub-
mit to the Ca-
liph.

images became more frequent than they had been for many years. Abdolmelik himself took a journey thither, and seemed well pleased with the alterations Hejage had made.

The Caliph, shortly after the taking of Mecca, gave a proof of his gratitude to that general, by adding the governments of Hejaz and Irak to those of Chorasan and Sejestan, which he already possessed. And Hejage, in return for the Caliph's favour, took all possible measures to subdue the several bodies of rebels, who from time to time took up arms against Abdolmelik. He is indeed reproached with having exercised the utmost severity and most excessive cruelties, and particularly at Medina, where it seemed as if that general had resolved to cut off all the inhabitants, or force them to quit the city. He also exercised the same severities and cruelties against such of the Irakians and Basorians as dared to rebel against the Caliph; and, spight of the clamours and secret practices of the conspirators, he had either the prudence or the good fortune to subdue all the enemies of Abdolmelik.

Hegyra 75.
Ch. ær. 694.

Fresh revolt
against the
Caliph.

But the greatest opposition that Hejage ever met with was begun by one Shebid a Karegite, and Saleh, another sectary. They had formed a conspiracy to assassinate Abdolmelik at Mecca, at the time he made a pilgrimage to that city. They came there to execute their design; but hearing that it was discovered to the Caliph, they fled away
with

with the utmost precipitation. And far from submitting, they raised a body of troops, and putting themselves at their head, committed great ravages in Mesopotamia, a province which was then governed by an old officer named Merwan.

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LIK.
Hegyra 75.
Ch. ær. 694.

That governor having received advice of the insurrection, resolved to quell it. But finding the number of the rebels was so small, he despised them, and sent some detachments out against them, which, though they were more numerous than the conspirators, were far from being able to deal with them, for one of their men was as good as twenty other Mahometans: and in fact the troops that were sent to oppose them, were almost totally routed, and their commander was killed in an action that happened. That victory greatly encouraged Shebid and his associate; they made new levies, and their troops, which had before consisted only of infantry, were now partly mounted, and formed a body of cavalry, by means of the horses which they took from their enemies in the last battle.

Hejage, enraged at the insolence of the rebels, sent out a body of troops under the command of Hareth-al-Hamdani, with orders to use his utmost endeavours to destroy the whole party. That officer came up with them at a place called Modbage, near Mausil, the capital of Mesopotamia; he attacked them almost as soon he came in sight of their army, and pushed them so furiously, that

Hegyra 76.
Ch. ær. 695.
The rebels
lose a battle.

Saleh

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Hegyra 76.
Ch. ar. 695.

Saleh and a great number of his chief officers were killed at the first onset. Shebid had also like to have lost his life in the action. He was beat from his horse, and narrowly escaped being trampled on by his own cavalry, but his men luckily carried him off. So soon as he was remounted, he continued the fight with the utmost ardour; but finding his troops considerably weakened by the loss he had sustained at the beginning of the action, he resolved to retreat to an empty castle which was near the field of battle; and this they performed in such good order, that the enemy dared not to attack them in their retreat.

They are in-
vested in a
castle.

Hareth forthwith invested the castle, and resolved to destroy them all. He commanded a great quantity of wood to be brought, and laid at the castle gate; he then ordered his men to set it on fire, and go to rest, supposing the entrance of the castle would be so well guarded by the flames, that the rebels would not attempt to make their escape.

They fall
out, and cut
the Caliph's
army in
pieces.

Shebid, who wisely considered that he should not be able to defend himself against so great a force, in the morning came to a resolution of endeavouring to extricate himself from the difficulty that night; he spoke to his men, who readily agreed to stand by him in the enterprize. Necessity made them industrious and inventive; they found means of getting out, notwithstanding the fire; and the besiegers were amazed when about midnight they saw Shebid and his soldiers in the
midst

midst of their camp, cutting all to pieces that they came at. Al-Hamdani caused an alarm to be sounded, and with a few troops that he got together attempted to stop their progress, when his men were all put to the sword by the enemy, and the general himself was struck down, but immediately relieved by those about him; and as he was but slightly wounded, he was resolved to make a push in hopes of repulsing the enemy; but this attempt was of no use, and occasioned the loss of some of his bravest men. The rest fled with great consternation and confusion, and the general with difficulty escaped with his life.

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Hegyra 76.
Ch. ær. 695.

This victory swelled the pride of Shebid, and rendered him more enterprizing than he was before: and though his troops were far from being numerous, he thought himself in a condition of engaging with any force that could be sent out against him. He became terrible even to Hejage, who having marched in person to subdue that rebel, was so roughly handled in several rencounters, that he was forced to give over his attempts, and send for reinforcements, to prevent that formidable adversary from gaining an absolute superiority. He retreated to Basorah, and left Shebid master of the field.

So soon as Hejage was marched away, Shebid had the assurance to attack Cufah with the few troops then under his command. However, he made himself master of the

Hegyra 77.
Ch. ær. 696.

They attack
Cufah and
take it.

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Hegyra 77.
Ch. ær. 696.

Hejage de-
feats them.

Shebid is
drowned in
the Tygris.

Hegyra 82.
Ch. ær. 701.

place. Thither Hejage marched, when he had received the reinforcements he required, his army then amounting to fifteen or sixteen thousand men. Shebid, who had not above six hundred men with him, was so rash as to join battle with Abdolmelik's general; and he was punished for his temerity; for the action being begun, neither his own valour, nor the intrepidity of his troops, could enable him long to withstand so superior a force. The rebels, however, made a most gallant resistance; but Shebid seeing many of his bravest soldiers fall, and his brother, and even his wife, having been slain before his eyes, he was forced to betake himself to flight, with the remains of his troops. He retired to the frontiers of Persia, where he was greatly harassed by a party of Syrians, who lost a hundred men, whom Shebid killed during the pursuit. After some time Shebid advanced to Ehwaz, and attempting to take possession of a bridge, the Syrians, who closely pursued him, disputed the passage with him; and at the very time he was engaged with the enemy on the bridge, his horse took flight, fell with him into the Tygris, and he was drowned. His body was taken up out of the river, and his head was cut off, and sent to Hejage.

By the death of that arch rebel an end was put to all the intestine divisions that had arisen in the mahometan empire since the days of Ali. But in the 82d year of the
Hegyra

Hegyra a dangerous commotion arose, occasioned by a grudge between Hejage and a captain named Abdarrahan.

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Hegyra 82.
Ch. ær. 701.

Hejage, who intensely hated him, had maliciously plotted his destruction, and sent him with an inconsiderable force against the Turks, with orders to carry the war into the heart of their country. Abdarrahan assumed the command; but having received private information of Hejage's barbarous intentions towards him, he soon acquainted his troops, that they were sent on the expedition purposely to be made a sacrifice. The officers and soldiers, being enraged at the base and malicious dealings of Hejage, vowed revenge; and renouncing all obedience to Hejage, they immediately acknowledged Abdarrahan as governor of Irak, and took the oath to him in that quality.

Abdarrah-
man is ac-
knowledge
governor of
Irak.

This done, to the great satisfaction of Abdarrahan, he marched towards the country of the Turks, with a view only to conclude a treaty with the sovereign of that country: after which he returned into Irak, where he made no secret of his intentions to attack Hejage, and revenge his perfidiousness. The latter having been soon informed of Abdarrahan's design, resolved to prevent him, and marched out to meet him with a very numerous body of troops: but, spight of that precaution, Hejage was beaten in the first encounter; and Abdarrahan marched his vic-

He concludes
a treaty with
the Turks,
and gains se-
veral advan-
tages over
Hejage.

ABDOLME-
LIK.

Hegyra 82.

Ch. ær. 701.

He is acknow-
ledged Caliph
at Basorah.

And also at
Cufah.

torious army to Basorah, where he knew his enemy was detested.

The inhabitants received him with such loud acclamations, as must have been very pleasing to him; and in the height of their transports, they not only renounced all obedience to Hejage, as their governor, but they even went so far as to throw off all allegiance to the Caliph, and proclaim Abdarrahan in his stead.

Hejage, who well knew the consequence of giving his rival time to establish his authority, hazarded another battle, and was beaten as before. Abdarrahan, being resolved to push his advantage, marched to Cufah, the inhabitants of which city were, he found, greatly enraged against Hejage for his tyrannical behaviour towards them. The inhabitants of Cufah therefore followed the example of the Basorians, and Abdarrahan was in like manner proclaimed in both cities. Hejage, vexed to the highest degree to see his reputation sullied by having been so often beaten, resolved to have another trial, in hopes of wiping off so mortifying a disgrace.

Hejage ga-
thers together
an army, and
defeats him.

He gathered together as many troops as he could. His rival did the like on his part, but with much greater success, for Hejage by his cruelties having alienated the minds of the inhabitants from him, they chose rather to list under the banners of Abdarrahan, who either really was, or seemed to be,

be, much more moderate and merciful. ABDOLME-
LIK.
Hegyra 82.
Ch. ær. 701.
The latter had therefore soon an army of one hundred thousand men under his command. Hejage would have found great difficulty to have set on foot an army capable to face so great a body of men, but as Abdolmelik was personally interested in the affair, he sent him several large detachments of Syrians, which soon enabled him to take the field.

The two armies having began their march, came in sight of each other at a place called Dairkorrah, where they entertained such apprehensions of each other, as to omit no proper means for their security. They covered their respective camps with strong entrenchments, to avoid being surprized ; and the armies remained almost three months in the same position. However, they were far from being idle, for scarce a day passed without some action between parties, and some bloody skirmishes, in which the advantages were nearly equal. But at last a skirmish happening between two detachments, and fresh troops being continually sent from the two armies in support of their respective friends, the action became general, and proved fatal to Abdarrahan's party. His troops were totally routed. That general endeavoured in vain to rally them, he was borne down by a torrent of fugitives, and obliged to mix himself amongst them in order to escape the enemy.

ABDOLME-
LIK.

Hegyra 82.
Ch. ær. 701.

Abdarrahman
is taken priso-
ner and relea-
sed by a king
of the Turks.

Abdarrahman fled for refuge to Sahan, where he was soon seized by a body of horse sent out to pursue him ; but Zentil, king of the Turks, who had conceived a great friendship for that general from the time they concluded the last treaty together, came to his assistance, and rescued him. Hejage was no sooner informed of it, than he sent a messenger to Zentil, and demanded Abdarrahman to be delivered up, threatening, in case of refusal, to enter the king's territories with his victorious army, and put all to fire and sword.

Abdarrahman
destroys him-
self.

Zentil, who was not in a condition to resist so powerful a force, and that commanded by a general who usually went so resolutely to work, was greatly embarrassed what answer to return. He was unwilling to have upon his hands such an enemy as Hejage, and it pained him greatly to think of delivering up a friend, to whom he had promised an asylum in his dominions. In so critical a juncture, Abdarrahman himself put an end to the whole difficulty. That general, fearing each moment that he should be given up into the hands of an implacable enemy, who would insult him under his misfortunes, and put him to a shameful and cruel death, threw himself from the top of the house which Zentil had appointed for his residence. After the death of that rebel peace was by degrees restored in Arabia, and the people unani-

unanimously acknowledged the Caliph of ABDOLME-
LIK. Syria as their sovereign.

Hejage, covered with glory, began to taste the sweets of peace, and took due measures to establish Abdolmelik's power in all the provinces of Irak under his government. Hegyra 83.
Ch. ær. 702.
Hejage builds
the city of
Wafet. He then built a city on the Tygris, which he called Wafet, an arabic word, that signifies middle, and he named it so, because it stood on a spot of ground at equal distance from Cufah and Basorah.

Abdolmelik did not live long to enjoy the fruits of the peace with which his subjects were then blessed. He died in the 86th year of the Hegyra, and about the 20th year of his reign, aged about 60 years. Hegyra 86.
Ch. ær. 705.
The death of
Abdolmelik. Ebn Athir, an arabian author, relates that the Caliph was seized with a distemper which his physicians declared would be mortal, if they gave him any thing to drink. But his thirst increased so violently, that he was unable to forbear, and commanded his son Waled to give him some water. Waled, who loved his father, refused to comply in consequence of the orders of the physicians. The Caliph then requested the same thing of Fatima his daughter, but his son prevented her, by holding her in his arms; whereupon Abdolmelik told Waled in a passion, that if he did not let his sister go, he would disinherit him. Upon this Waled was forced to yield, and the Caliph had no sooner drank the fatal draught he so eagerly required,

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Hegyra 86.
Ch. ar. 705.

required, than he instantly fainted, and died in a very short time.

This Caliph was more powerful than any of his predecessors, but his power was not owing to any of those good qualities which he possessed before he attained the crown. Abulpheda says, that this prince lost all merit from the moment he ascended the throne. However, he was so fortunate as to have excellent commanders, by whose means his undertakings were attended with the greatest success.

He is accused of extreme avarice, on account of which he was nicknamed Rash-al-Hejer, that is to say, “sweat of a stone.” He was also called Abul Zebad, which signifies, “father of flies,” by reason of his breath : it is said his breath was so noisome, that it killed all the flies that settled on his lips.

He left four children, who enjoyed the Caliphate one after another ; to wit, Waled, Soliman, Yezid, and Hescham. It is related, that the fortune of those children was told him by a Mussulman, named Saad, a man excellently skilled in the interpretation of dreams. The Caliph dreamed one night that he urined in the most sacred part of the temple of Mecca, and this dream happening four times successively, Saad, who was consulted on that account, foretold that four of his children should successively possess the throne.

It is asserted that he was the first who coined money in Arabia: before which they made use of Greek and Persian money. Abdolmelik caused the following inscription to be put on his coin, "Say there is one God." The Caliph used to begin thus the letters he sent to the Greek emperor, who complained of it as an innovation, and desired he would alter it, otherwise he threatened he would send them some coin with such a mention of their prophet upon it, as they should not very well like. Abdolmelik, enraged at the menace, and resolving not to alter the form of his letters, prohibited the grecian money, and stamped some coin to be current in his own dominions. And this was the origin of the first coin of the Arabians.

ABDOLME-
LIK.
Hegyra 86.
Ch. ær. 705.
The Caliph
coins new
money.

W A L E D.

E L E V E N T H C A L I P H.

WALED, the eldest son of Abdolmelik, succeeded his father, and ascended the throne immediately after the death of that prince. Tho' this Caliph did nothing in person, yet he is very famous on account of the great conquests made by the Arabians during his reign. They enlarged their dominions to the Atlantick ocean by the streights of Gibraltar: they entered Europe, and

WALED.
Hegyra 86.
Ch. ær. 705.
Conquests of
the Arabians
in the reign of
Waled.

WALED. and conquered the southern provinces of
 Hegyra 86. Spain *. They at the same time pushed
 Ch ær. 705. their conquests towards the East, where they
 subdued the greatest part of the Indies on
 this side the river Ganges; then northwards,
 where they made themselves masters of Ko-
 uarefm, Transoxana, Turkestan, and other
 provinces.

Hegyra 88. These last conquests were owing to the
 Ch. ær. 707. valour of Catibah-ebn-Muflim, a famous
 Catibah captain, and the first Arabian that entered
 makes him- Kouarefm in an hostile manner. He had been
 self master of appointed governor of Chorasan, a country
 Kouarefm. adjoining to that province; and having passed
 some time in establishing some good order in
 the countries over which he presided, he
 formed a design of immortalizing his name,
 by extending the limits of the Arabian em-
 pire.

He passed the river Gihon at the head of
 a formidable army, and without much diffi-
 culty passed the frontiers of Kouarefm.
 However in attempting to advance further,
 he met with greater obstacles; the people
 took up arms in defence of their country.
 But Catibah so animated his troops by the
 example he set them, that the Kouarefmians

* El Makin, an arabian author, relates that in the 93d
 year of the hegrya, one of Waled's generals seized Andalusia
 and the kingdom of Toledo, and brought to the Caliph the
 table of Solomon the son of David, which was made of a
 mixture of gold and silver, with three rows of pearls
 round it.

resisted in vain, and were forced to submit to the yoke.

WALED.
Hegyra 88.
Ch. ær. 707.

This victory did not satisfy the general: finding the people were idolators, he attempted to convert them to Islamism, and prevailed. Catibah pursued his advantage, passed the Oxus, and entered Tranfoxana, a province of Turkestan. Majurek, king of that country, was surprized by so sudden an inroad, and being unable to assemble a body of troops sufficient for his defence, he fled for refuge to the famous city of Samarcand, the capital of his dominions.

He enters
Tranfoxana.

Catibah pursued him thither, and invested the city; but he was forced to turn the siege into a blockade, for want of machines to batter the place. Having closely confined the inhabitants, and prevented their communication with the country, he resolved to make an assault on such parts of the fortifications as he judged to be the weakest. But his attack did not succeed: the inhabitants defended themselves with great bravery, and the Arabians were repulsed with great loss.

Catibah be-
sieves and
takes Samar-
cand.

This advantage made them insolent; they boldly appeared on their ramparts, and frequently rallied and abused the besiegers. Amongst other of their taunts, Catibah was told that the besieged said, "The place would never be taken, till it was taken by a camel-driver."

The

WALED.
Hegyra 88.
Ch. ær. 707.

The general had no sooner received the information, than he fell prostrate and returned thanks to God for such good news. His officers, amazed at the action, asked him what advantage he thought could accrue from the raillery of the besieged: "I am appointed," said he, "to conquer this city; for I remember that when I was very young, being of a very dull genius, my parents often told me, I was fit only for a camel-driver."

The courage of the troops was raised by the sanguineness with which Catibah formed his designs, and by the great resolution with which he issued his orders on this extraordinary occasion; though they wanted almost every thing necessary for the siege of a place, they found means to supply the defect by their great valour and activity, and at last they reduced the inhabitants to such straits, that, to avoid a storm, and to prevent the city from being plundered and totally ruined, they demanded to capitulate. Catibah consented to receive them on terms, and they agreed to pay a yearly tribute of one thousand denarii of gold, and three thousand slaves.

He introduces
and establishes
the mahometan
religion
there.

That general, who was very zealous for the propagation of Mussulmanism, resolved to destroy the idolatrous worship which then prevailed in the city, and to establish the mahometan religion in its stead. He condescended to instruct them himself, and was so

so successful in his endeavours, that all the idols were broken down, to introduce the worship of one God. He appointed Imams to cultivate the seeds of the religion which he had sown in their hearts: and in a short time he caused a stately mosque to be erected, where Islamism was openly preached; and the inhabitants became in the sequel devout observers of the law of Mahomet.

WALÉD.
Hegyra 88.
Ch. ær. 707.

Whilst Waled's generals were enlarging his dominions by the conquest of distant provinces, where they planted the mahometan faith, the Caliph was employed in building magnificent mosques at different places, in honour to the memory of the apostle of God, that the people, struck with awe at the majestic appearance of those edifices, might entertain a higher veneration for the doctrine taught therein.

Waled causes
mosques to be
erected in many
cities.

Waled founded a mosque at Damascus, which was a building worthy a king, and to render it more spacious, he caused the church of St. John Baptist, then belonging to the Christians, to be pulled down, and made use of the ground to enlarge his own mosque. Some authors say, that he offered the Christians 50,000 crowns, if they would surrender their church; but that they having refused to sell it, he took it from them by force, and caused it to be demolished, without paying them any consideration for the same.

At

WALED.
Hegyra 88.
Ch. ær. 707.

At the time he erected the mosque at Damascus, he ordered that at Medina to be rebuilt, in which he expended immense sums of money. He was resolved to spare no cost for the embellishment of a city, which had served Mahomet as a place of retreat from the fury of his enemies, and in which he ended his days, after having laid the foundations of one of the most extensive monarchies in the universe.

Nor did the Caliph forget Mecca, which was the place of the prophet's birth. He caused a plan to be prepared of the edifice he proposed to erect there; and having examined and approved it, he sent his architects to that city, and ordered Abdolaziz, who was then governor of Mecca, to comply with, and assist them in every thing they should think fit, and stand in need of, for the building of the mosque.

The work was forthwith taken in hand, and a great number of houses, the property of private persons, were thrown down, to form an immense square, in which they laid the foundation of the edifice. But in doing this, they met with great opposition, particularly from some ancient Mussulmen, who were grieved to see them depart from the plainness and simplicity used in the days of the prophet, to erect buildings of a new fancy, framed according to the rules of art, and with a stateliness and cost which seemed

ed to prognosticate a sudden relaxation in discipline and manners.

WALÉD.
Hegyra 89.
Ch. ær. 708.

But these complaints did not put a stop to the undertaking, and in a short time magnificent buildings reared their lofty heads, in places where formerly stood those antique ruins which had been the habitations of the first patriarchs of Mussulmanism. Historians have given us the following account and description of the mosques built by Waled.

Those great edifices consisted of quadrangles, the outsides whereof were adorned with three or four rows of galleries, in which two men might walk a-breast. Each stage of those galleries was supported by pillars, whose shafts were very small, and between the pillars were stone balconies, with open rails and ornaments. The chapiters of the columns were also ornamented in the same taste. At each corner of the mosque was a polygon tower of admirable architecture. From the top of these towers seven or eight Muezens, used twice a day to cry out Allah, Allah, &c, the signal that the hour of public prayer was at hand, and that the people should prepare for it by ablutions, and other ceremonies enjoined by the law. The mosques erected by Waled have generally served as a model for those since built by the Mahometans.

Waled not only founded houses for the service of religion, but he also from time to time caused instructions to be given to the people
of

Hegyra 90.
Ch. ær. 709.

WALED.
Hegyra 90.
Ch. ær. 709.

His hatred to
the Greeks.

of the conquered provinces, who were in general idolaters. But his aversion to the Heathens, in no wise equalled the hatred he bore to the Christians, and especially the Greeks. He prohibited his subjects from making any further use of the greek tongue, though it had before been taught in the schools, and employed to many purposes through the whole extent of his dominion, and though it was the language in which all publick and juridical acts and proceedings were written. Shortly after which he declared war against that nation, who had given him fresh cause of displeasure by affording a shelter to the Armenians, who had rebelled against him.

He declares
war against
the Greeks.

His army entered Greece, and having ravaged part of the country, advanced to the roman provinces, where they made themselves masters of some places of no great strength. The Caliph had ordered his troops to march into Asia-Minor, but his generals advised him to countermand the order, lest they should be surprized by the enemy. Besides, his soldiers were so loaded with plunder, that they had enough to do to carry it into Syria.

Hegyra 91,
92. &c.
Ch. ær. 710.
711. &c.

Divisions in
Greece.

The next year the Mussulmen entered Galatia, without meeting with any considerable opposition from the Grecians, whose empire had been long rent by intestine divisions. The throne was then become a prey to the strongest. The usurper committed all kinds of cruelties on the prince he dethroned,
and

and in his turn received his punishment in kind from a new competitor, who deprived him of the crown.

WALED.
Hegyra 92.
&c.
Ch. ær. 711.
&c.

Thus Justinian the second was dethroned by Leontius, who cut off his nose, and sent him into exile. Leontius in his turn was deposed by Abfimar, who banished him to a monastery, after having done with him in like manner as he had with his predecessor. Justinian having been restored to the throne by a new revolution, that prince gave a loose to his natural barbarity; he committed unheard-of cruelties on his subjects, and even carried his brutality so far, as to invent new kinds of punishments to torment such as had incurred his displeasure. The princes who succeeded him were for the most part inhuman monsters, who are remarkable in history only for their vices.

Troubles in
the Grecian
empire.

Such was the state and condition of the Grecian empire. The people, (who are commonly too apt to follow the example of their governors in doing evil) gave themselves up to infidelity, debauchery, and all sorts of crimes. Unable to defend themselves against the attempts of their enemies, they employed the forces they had on foot, only in supporting factions, and intestine war, which caused the devastation of cities and provinces, and the shedding the blood of citizens. Besides, their frontiers were unguarded, and their cities which lay nearest to the enemy defenceless, and as it were invited them to ex-

WALÉD.
Hegyra 92.
&c.
Ch. ær. 711.

tend their dominions, without battle and without siege.

It must however be confessed that the Grecians, animated perhaps by remembrance of their pristine valour, did sometimes endeavour to rouse themselves from their indolence, and shake off the yoke of those who boldly advanced into the very heart of their country, in order to enslave them; but these were feint attempts, and like a transitory flame, which is suddenly extinguished; insomuch that though the Mussulmen were strongly repulsed on some occasions, yet they returned to the charge. Thus they attacked the Grecian empire at several times, and at last shook its very foundations, as will appear in the sequel of this history.

The rapid success of the Mussulmen during the reign of Waled, gained that prince the titles of victorious and conqueror. Not that he any way personally contributed to them; but he was so lucky as to be provided of excellent generals, who, being favoured by fortune, and guided by consummate experience, succeeded in almost all their enterprises: the glory of their achievements redounded on the Caliph. And that prince is famous in history, as if he had always headed his troops, and their success had been solely owing to his bravery, or skill in the art of war.

Disagreement
of authors as
to Waled's
character.

As to his personal qualifications, authors differ widely in the account they give of them.

them. Syrian writers bestow on Waled the highest commendations, and look on him to be the greatest of the dynasty of the Om-miyans. Arabian authors, on the contrary, describe him to have been violent, unjust, cruel; in a word, worthy the name they bestowed on him, of Pharaëni Ommiyah, that is to say, the Pharaoh of the house of Ommiyah; alledging that this prince had all the bad qualities of the Pharaoh of Egypt, who reigned in the days of Moses. Others, when they name that Caliph, always add an invective or malediction. There is one, for example, who never calls him otherwise than Waled-nam-peled; that is, Waled whose name is abominable.

WALED.

Hegyra 92.
Ch. ær. 711.

He died in the 96th year of the Hegyra, and 715th year of Christ, after a reign of ten or eleven years. "He was buried," says El-Makin, "at Damascus, in the sepulchre of the little gate." The same author says, that this Caliph was tall, that his complexion was very brown, and his face much pitted with the small pox, and that he was flat-nosed, but that he was otherwise a personable man. They make no mention of his children, but speak of his wives: alledging, that he espoused sixty-three women.

Hegyra 96.
Ch. ær. 715.

Death of the
Caliph.

During the reign of this prince, the name of Saracens, which had been usually given only to the Arabian Mussulmen since the time of Omar the first, was bestowed by Christian authors on all such as professed Mahometism,

Hegyra 96. as well in Arabia, as in Syria, and the other
Ch. ar. 715. countries under their government.

Several stories
concerning
Hejage.

About a year before Waled's death, the Ommiyans lost the famous Hejage, who had rendered himself so formidable to their enemies during the reign of Abdolmelik. Arabian authors also say that he had a great share in those exploits, which rendered the Caliphate of Waled so illustrious; but, instead of giving a particular account of his great feats and gallant achievements, they relate some incidents and stories, which are of little consequence to the history of the Arabians in general, and only serve to illustrate the greatness and singularity of the genius of that eminent man.

It is related, that this general being one day a hunting, and having lost his company, met with a wild Arab, who knew nothing of him. By way of amusement he asked the Arab, what sort of man that Hejage was, of whom they talked so much in their country. "I never saw him" answered the Arab, "but he is a very cruel wicked man." Hejage, a little surprized, said to him, "How! dost thou not know me?" the Arabian having answered in the negative; "I must tell you then, friend," replied Hejage, "that I am the very Hejage you have been speaking so ill of." The Arab, without the least concern, asked Hejage in his turn if he knew him; and he answered no. "I must inform you then," said the countryman, "that I am of the family of Zobeir,

Zobeir, whose posterity are all fools three Hegyra 96.
 days in the year, and this is one of them.” Ch. ær. 715.

Though Hejage was very severe, and even cruel, he could not help laughing at so ingenious a come-off; and, far from punishing the Arab for his indiscretion, he civilly asked him the way to find out his companions.

On a like occasion he came to the entrance of a wood, where a shepherd was feeding his sheep. As he galloped thither, the noise frightened the flock, and they scattered and ran away. The shepherd in a fury began to curse the person who had so scared his sheep. Hejage heard him, and instead of shewing any resentment, he civilly saluted the shepherd, and wished him peace. The Arab, regardless of his civility, answered in a rage, that he wished him neither peace nor blessing. Hejage, pretending not to understand him, begged he would give him some water to drink, for he was exceeding thirsty. The Arab told him, there was a fountain near, and he might alight and help himself; for he was neither his fellow nor his man, to do him such a piece of service.

Hegage took all in good part, and did as the shepherd bad him; and being returned, he asked the Arab whom he believed to be the greatest and most excellent of all men? “Mahomet” answered the shepherd. “And what say you of Ali?” added Hejage. The Arab answered “his excellency cannot be sufficiently expressed in words.” Hejage con-

Hegyra 96.
Ch. ar. 715.

tinuing the discourse, asked what he thought of Abdolmelik, (then reigning Caliph) and Hejage, his general, governor of the two Arabians. The Arab was silent, and seemed unwilling to answer; but on being pressed, he answered, that he looked on Abdolmelik to be a bad prince. "Why so?" said Hejage. "Why" replied the Arabian, "because he has sent us for a governor, the most wicked man under the heavens."

Whilst he was still speaking, a bird flew over their heads making a sort of noise, which the Arab had no sooner heard, than he looked stedfastly on Hejage, and asked him who he was. The general was desirous to know the reason for his curiosity. "The bird* which flew by," said the shepherd, "told me there was a company of people not far off, and that very likely you are the chief of them." He soon found he was not mistaken; for Hejage's company instantly came up, and expressed their great joy at finding him again. He soon departed, and carried the Arab with him, who having then no doubt to whom he had been speaking with so much rudeness and indiscretion, would willingly have been dispensed with from

* There were people amongst the Arabians that pretended to understand the language of birds, which they said had been known amongst them ever since the time of Solomon and the queen of Sheba, who had a bird called Huddud, or the Houp, who was the messenger of their amours.

taking the journey, but he was forced to obey. Hegyra 96.
Ch. ær. 715.

The next day Hejage sent for him at dinner time, and made him sit down at his table. The Arab, before he began to eat, instead of the grace commonly used by Musfulmen, said: "God grant that the end of this meal may be as fortunate as the beginning."

This grace was taken notice of; but Hejage made as if he had not heard it. Whilst they were eating, he asked the Arab if he remembered the conversation that passed between them the day before. This question frightened the Arab, who thought he was likely to pay dear for the honour of sitting at so great a man's table. Hejage immediately added, "You must absolutely chuse one of these two things, either to acknowledge me for your master, and then I will retain you in my service, or else to be sent to Abdolmelik, to whom I shall give an account of all you have said of him."

The Arab, encouraged at the proposal made him by Hejage, of entring into his service, instantly answered, with the same freedom of language he had used at their first interview: "There is a third way you may take, which seems to me to be much better." "What is that?" said Hejage. "It is," said the Arab "to send me home, and that you and I may never see each other any more." Hejage was so well pleased at the ingenuity of the answer,

Hegyra 96.
Ch. ær. 715.

swer, that he gave the shepherd ten thousand drachms of silver, and sent him home according to his desire.

The behaviour of Hejage on another occasion, plainly shewed what he was. An officer having been condemned to die, amongst many other persons taken prisoners in the battle which Hejage gained over Abdarrahan, the general, to gratify his cruel inclination commanded the execution to be performed in his presence. One of the prisoners, just as he was going to be executed, desired leave to speak with him; and it being granted, the officer addressed Hejage in these terms: “ It would be no more than an act of justice, my lord, to grant me my pardon; for I well remember that Abdarrahan having once reviled you in an excessive manner, I told him he was highly to blame, and I have ever since been at variance with him.”

Upon this Hejage asked him, if he could produce any witness to prove his having so blamed Abdarrahan; and the officer named another prisoner, who was sentenced to undergo the same punishment. He caused the person to be brought before him, and on his examination, finding the fact was true, he pardoned the officer. He then asked the witness, if he had also taken his part at the time Abdarrahan was so loudly inveighing against him; the undaunted man fiercely answered “ I did not.” “ And why did you not?” replied Hejage, with great warmth. “ Be-
cause,”

cause," said the other, "you are my enemy." ^{Hegyra 96.}
^{Ch. ær. 715.}
 Hejage gave them both their lives; to the one, to acknowledge his obligation; to the other for having confessed the truth with so much frankness and courage.

There are many other actions which reflect great honour on Hejage; but there are still more which blacken his character, on account of the unheard-of cruelties he committed, either in the army, or in the places under his government; so that he was much more feared than beloved where ever he commanded.

As a proof that he had the same cruel disposition even to his death, it is related, that when he was confined to his bed of his last illness, he sent for an astrologer, and asked him, if he did not find in his ephemeris that some great captain was near the end of his days. The astrologer having mused a while, answered, that a great general called Kolaïd, * would, according to his observation, die quickly. Then, said Hejage, "I am certainly the person, for that is the very name my mother gave me when I was a child." The astrologer, instead of saying any thing to comfort him, imprudently boasted of the infallibility of his art, and bluntly told him, there was not the least doubt but his distemper would carry him off. Hejage, enraged at this peremptory sentence, replied, "Since

* This word signifies in the Arabick, a little dog.

then

Hegyra 96.
Ch. ær. 715

then I must die, and you are so dextrous in your predictions, I will send you before me to the other world, that I may make use of you at my arrival there." He accordingly ordered his head to be cut off, and it was done upon the spot.

Death of
Hejage.

That general died shortly afterwards, aged only 54 years. His death happened in the 95th year of the Hegyra, and the 714th year of the Christian æra.

S O L I M A N.

The TWELFTH CALIPH.

SOLIMAN.
Hegyra 97.
Ch. ær. 716.

Soliman signifies his accession to the throne by acts of clemency.

AFTER the death of Waled, Soliman-ebn-Abdolmelik, his brother, ascended the throne, and signalized his accession to the crown by acts of clemency and humanity, which gained him the illustrious surname of Mestah-al-Kair, that is, "chief of good, or of goodness." He set at liberty all persons that were imprisoned for debt, or petty crimes and offences. And this grace he bestowed without affording the least cause of complaint; for he discharged the debts out of his own purse, and accommodated matters in the other cases, to the satisfaction of all parties. Soliman was not only admired for his humane disposition, he was also remarkable for the soundness and refinement of his understanding, and for being one of the

the best orators of the age. On the very day of his proclamation he made a speech, which, on account of its loftiness of sentiment, and elegance of expression, gained him universal applause, and gave his subjects a high idea of what they might expect from so accomplished a prince.

SOLIMAN.
Hegyra 97.
Ch. ær. 716.

And it appeared in the sequel that they had not formed a wrong judgment of their sovereign; the Caliph in all his actions shewed an uncommon greatness of mind, a sincere affection for his subjects, and the utmost regard to the good of the state. In the time of the Caliphs his predecessors, the governors of provinces had for the most part, like so many leeches, unmercifully fattened on the blood of the wretched inhabitants. Soliman speedily remedied the disorder. He dismissed such as were not fit for their posts, and appointed in their stead men of merit, who were neither ambitious nor self-interested, and who had no other view than the good of their prince and the happiness of his people.

He dismisses
the bad go-
vernors, and
appoints pro-
per men in
their stead.

Soliman at the same time resumed the design of marching against the Greeks, and of attacking them even in Constantinople their capital. With this view he equipped a fleet consisting of a great number of ships, and transported two hundred thousand men, who, marching over Thrace, formed the siege of that metropolis. Whilst they were carrying on their attacks by land, fifteen hundred

Hegyra 98.
Ch. ær. 717.

He besieges
Constan-
tinople.

SOLIMAN.
Hegyra 98.
Ch. ær. 717.

Bad success of
that expedi-
tion.

dred arabian ships, loaded with all sorts of ammunition and provisions, appeared in sight of the city, and cut off all hopes of relief by sea: and it was towards the sea the Saracens intended to form their principal attack against the place. But whilst they were making preparations for it, Leo, surnamed the Isaurian, who then possessed the Grecian throne, sent out a number of ships, filled with a combustible called the greek fire, which threw the arabian fleet into the utmost confusion. The Mussulmen, who were strangers to the effects of that fire, which burns all it fastens on, even in the midst of the water, were astonished to see several of their ships consumed in an instant.

The troops who carried on the attack by land, were no sooner informed of the damage done to their fleet, than they broke up the siege with the utmost precipitation, to get on board the ships that remained, before they were deprived of all means of safety. They sailed to the Thracian Bosphorus, whence they went to Solernum, where they wintered. But through a series of misfortunes, which seemed to attend the Mussulmen in their late enterprize, the season was so excessively rigorous, and the earth so covered with snow during the whole winter, that the greatest part of the Mussulmen army perished with cold and want.

This

This loss did not discourage Soliman; he made fresh preparations, and resolved he would the next year attempt to take Constantinople, spight of all resistance. The Mahometan forces were therefore embarked on board a numerous fleet, consisting of large ships and lighter vessels, which set sail for that city. This second attempt was still more unfortunate than the first. The emperor Leo, encouraged by his success the last year, fitted out and prepared a great number of the same sort of fire-ships as had already proved so serviceable, in hopes of burning the new fleet to ashes. The very winds seemed to declare in favour of the Greeks, for the Saracens were no sooner under sail, than a furious tempest arose, which wrecked all the large ships on the coast of Thrace. The lighter ships weathered the storm through the skilfulness of the mariners: but at the very time they thought all danger was past, they were boarded by the Grecian fire-ships, who burned a part, and took the remainder of their fleet, and all the Mussulmen were cruelly slain.

SOLIMAN.

Hegyra 98.

Ch. ær. 717.

Soliman
sends a second
fleet, which is
destroyed.

The Caliph was extremely grieved at this fatal event. His spirits were dejected, and he fell into a kind of consumption, which brought him to the grave. The taking of Constantinople was his favourite scheme; and he had so set his heart upon that enterprize, that the great advantages gained by his generals in other countries were disregarded.

Yezid-

SOLIMAN.

Hegyra 98.

Ch. ær. 717.

The Mussul-
men become
masters of
Georgia.

Yezid-ebn-Mahaled, one of his most experienced commanders, had conquered Georgia, a province of ancient Hyrcania. Having totally subdued the country, he left there a sufficient body of troops to keep the inhabitants in awe, and marched towards Tabarestan, to make himself master of that province. But this new enterprize was at first unsuccessful. Akshid, who was sovereign of that country, marched up to him, gave him battle, and gained the victory. The inhabitants of Georgia, having been informed of Yezid's defeat, revolted, and cut in pieces the troops which the Mussulman general had left in the garrisons of that country. Yezid, enraged at their revolt, and resolved to inflict a severe punishment on them for their defection, concluded a peace with Akshid. The Tabarestan monarch, who heartily desired to see the Saracens at a greater distance from his territories, readily complied with Yezid's terms, and even gave him as considerable presents as he could have made to a victorious enemy. He bestowed on him a large sum of money, a great quantity of saffron, and four hundred slaves, each of which presented the general with a turban of costly silk in a silver dish.

Yezid, having thus agreed on terms with that prince, marched into Georgia against the rebels, and offered them battle. Their chief, named Marzaban, declined accepting it, and shut himself up in a strong hold, expecting

expecting that Yezid's army would be destroyed, if he ventured to besiege him ; but the event did not answer his expectations.

SOLIMAN.

Hegyra 98.

Ch. ær. 717.

The Saracen general invested the place, and in a short time he began his attacks with so much vigour, that he was soon master of the town, when he instantly put to death all such as were most active in the rebellion. Marzaban and his chief officers were hanged on the spot, and four thousand of the most seditious were put to the sword.

The conquest of that province, and the other advantages which the Mussulmen gained at the same time, might have afforded consolation to the Caliph for the ill success of his designs upon Constantinople ; but he had the misfortune at the same time to lose his favourite son Ajub ; which loss renewed his former grief, and so greatly affected his mind, and impaired his health, that he was persuaded all the art of the physicians could not restore him.

From that time he thought of setting his affairs in order, before he departed this life ; and as the good of his subjects had been his chief care, he was resolved, without delay, to name a successor, from whom they might meet with the same regard and affection, as he had always shewed to them.

Soliman names Omar to be his successor.

As Soliman left no male children, the crown should in course have descended to Yezid his brother, who was also a son of Abdolmelik ; but as he found Yezid was not possessed

SOLIMAN.
Hegyra 98.
Ch. ær. 717.

possessed of those qualifications which form a good sovereign, and gain him the hearts of the people, he without hesitation excluded him from the throne, and named in his stead Omar-ben-Abdalaziz his cousin german.

But this nomination was not openly made, it was even industriously concealed till after his death. A few days before he died, he sent for Rhaja his vizir, and ordered him in his presence to prepare a writing, importing, “ That having the good of the empire at heart, and having maturely deliberated on the measures proper to be taken in order to attain so desirable an end, he appointed Omar-ben-Abdalaziz to be his successor, he being the most worthy to ascend the throne, and that after his death, Yezid should possess the Caliphate.”

He signed the writing, and caused it to be sealed before him ; and to prevent any alteration being made in his limitation of the crown, he caused the chief Mussulmen to be assembled, and told them he had thought of a successor, but that the person's name must be concealed till after his death, and asked them if they would consent to his nomination. They all complied, and took an oath to acknowledge for their sovereign the person he had thought fit to appoint.

Hegyra 99.
Ch. ær. 718.
Death of Soliman.

This appointment of a successor was one of the last acts of the Caliph's life : he died at Marbek, a city of Syria, in the forty-fifth year

year of his age, after having reigned about three years. Some authors attribute his death to a pleurisy; others to a surfeit. The latter opinion seems the best founded, as all authors agree this prince was excessively voracious; on which subject they relate stories which are highly improbable.

SOLIMAN.

Hegyra 99.

Ch. ær. 718.

Amongst other authors there are some who assert, that he sometimes eat for breakfast as much as three roasted sheep would weigh; and that he afterwards dined in public with his nobility, and eat very heartily. And it is in general allowed, that he daily eat one hundred pounds of victuals.

This Caliph was a tall lean man, of a fair complexion, an agreeable countenance, and was somewhat lame. Historians never mention him without the highest commendations: they describe him to be a man of most exalted and generous sentiments, unwearied in his application to procure the good and happiness of his subjects; in a word, as one of the greatest princes that ever governed the mahometan empire.

In the reign of this prince we have an account of the rise of the Barmecidæ, a family which will make a great figure amongst the Mussulmen in the history of the Caliphs. It is thus related: a Persian, named Jaffar, or Giaffar, who was descended from the ancient kings of Persia, left his country on account of the civil wars which raged there, fled for shelter to Damascus, and implored Soliman

Rise of the
Barmecidæ.

SOLIMAN.
Hegyra 99.
Ch. ær. 718.

to afford him an asylum in his dominions. When he was introduced to that prince, the Caliph on a sudden turned pale, and commanded him to leave the room, believing he had poison about him. Soliman suspected it by means of two stones which he always wore on his arm; they were set in manner of a bracelet, and always made a little noise by striking against each other, whensoever any person came near the Caliph with poison.

Jaffar was greatly astonished at the Caliph's sudden indisposition, as well as at the order he had received to depart. But he soon found, by what was rumoured about the court, that some person at the audience was suspected of carrying poison; upon which he forthwith cleared up the matter: he told the courtiers, that the Caliph was not in the least danger of any design against his life: that since the last revolutions which had happened in his country, he had always been provided with it; that having been long threatened by his enemies with an ignominious death, he had taken that precaution to avoid their cruelty; and to that end had caused a ring to be made, in the bezil of which was contained so subtle a poison, that by sucking ever so small a quantity of it, he was sure of dying on the spot, and thereby depriving his enemies of the pleasure they expected in putting him to death.

This

This eclaircissement quieted the whole court : Jaffar appeared again before the Caliph, and was afterwards highly in favour with that prince. Soliman received great benefit from the wholesome advice the Persian gave him ; amongst other regulations which he caused to be made in the mussulman empire, he prevailed on the Caliph to call in all the specie, and to coin money with much less alloy than had been used in the coin before current in his dominions. Jaffar was made superintendant on that occasion, and in a short time the money had acquired such a degree of fineness, that in all future operations and attempts, they could never attain the same perfection.

SOLIMAN.

Hegyra 99.

Chr. ær. 718.

As Jaffar had occasion many times to relate at the Caliph's court the particulars of the revolutions that had happened in his country, and to mention how often he had been on the point of having recourse to the poison contained in his ring, he frequently made use of the word Barmek, which signifies in the Persian tongue, " to suck." The Syrians hearing that word so often repeated, formed it into a surname for Jaffar, whom they commonly called Jaffar Barméki. From whence his descendants, and in general all such of his family as came to settle in Syria, were called Barmekidæ. At least, so Tawarik, an Arabian author, relates the matter.

O M A R II.

The THIRTEENTH CALIPH.

OMAR II.
Hegyra 99.
Ch. ær. 718.

SO soon as the death of Soliman was made public, the vizir Rhaja assembled the chief lords of the mussulman empire, and laid before them the writing which the late Caliph had entrusted him with. It was read over, and immediately Omar-ben-Abdalaziz, whom he had nominated to be Caliph, was unanimously proclaimed, and seated on the throne, where they paid him the homage due to his new dignity.

Omar's love
to simplicity.

From the very moment of his advancement, he gave proofs of his love to modesty and simplicity; his conduct was diametrically opposite to that of the first Caliphs of the house of Ommiyah, who were fond of luxury and magnificence. When the principal officers of state, and other persons waited on him, in order to attend him with the accustomed ceremonies to the chief mosque, where he was to be inaugurated, they offered him the finest horses in his predecessor's stables, that he might make choice of such a number as he thought proper for so august a ceremony. Omar refused them, and went on foot with his train to the mosque. When he returned, they would have conducted him to the palace appointed for

for the Caliphs ; but he declared he would not leave the house he had usually dwelt in.

OMAR II.
Hegyra 99.
Ch. ær. 718.

Some of the principal Mussulmen censured him for his conduct, and told him, they could not conceive why he should refuse to inhabit a palace which the Caliphs, his predecessors, had thought themselves bound to reside in. “ I would not,” said he, “ incommode either the relations or servants of my predecessor, who now dwell there : more especially as my own house affords me all the conveniences I stand in need of.”

This modest behaviour of the Caliph, which could flow only from a good heart, was far from being generally approved : on the contrary, the courtiers, who were fond of pomp and shew, were, for the most part, excessively disgusted at it ; but he on no occasion sunk more in the esteem of his subjects, than on account of his conduct towards the friends and descendants of Ali.

He restored to that family the lands called Fidac, which had formerly belonged to them : Mahomet gave it as a portion to Fatima his daughter, on her marriage with Ali. Omar appointed a receiver of the rents of that estate, and directed him to pay the same in equal portions to all such of the Alians as were then living. This favour, shewn to a family which the Ommyans mortally hated, caused great heart-burnings and complaints ; but the Caliph disregarded

He restores
the lands of
Fidac to the
Alians.

OMAR II. them, and soon took a step which seemed to
 Hegyra 99. be of much greater consequence.
 Ch. ar. 718.

He suppresses the curses de-
 nounced a-
 gainst Ali. It has been already shewn that in the
 reign of Moawiyah, the first Caliph of the
 race of Ommiyah, the name of Ali was
 solemnly proscribed, and that in all public
 assemblies of the people, curses were de-
 nounced against his whole family. This
 custom had been constantly observed, ever
 since the accession of the Ommiyan family
 to the throne. Omar resolved to suppress it,
 and took the following method to bring it
 about.

He imparted his design to a Jew, with
 whom he concerted a conversation that was
 to pass between them in public, in order to
 bring about what he had resolved in favour
 of the Alians. This done, the Jew appear-
 ed one day at court, at a time the Caliph
 was surrounded by a great number of the
 principal nobility. Omar having perceived
 him, civilly took notice of him, as being a
 man of note in Damascus, and asked him
 if he had any request to make. The Jew
 answered, that he was come to wait on him
 about an affair of great importance; that he
 had a favour to beg of him, which was, that
 he would give him his daughter to wife.

Omar, affecting great surprize, hastily
 answered, "How! what mean you by
 such a request; are not you of a different
 religion?" "Did not Ali marry the daugh-
 ter of Mahomet?" replied the Jew. "He
 did.

did, but the case is widely different," said OMAR II; Omar; "Ali was one of the faithful, and Hegyra 99. the commander of the faithful." "What!" Ch. ær. 718. returned the Jew, "was Ali one of the faithful? why then do you daily denounce curses against him in your mosques?"

Upon this Omar, turning to the chief courtiers who were then about him, "It lies upon you to answer this Jew," said he; "for I must confess he has so puzzled me, that I know not what to say to him." The courtiers seemed intirely at a loss for a reply; and the Caliph finding them silent, said to those present: "Since it is so, I from this day suppress that public form of malediction, and instead of it shall be used this verse of the Koran: "Lord, pardon our offences, and pardon also our brethren who profess the same faith with us."

This extraordinary change immediately raised great disturbances, and especially amongst the Ommiyans, who were vexed to see a prince of their family presume to abolish a form which the first Caliph of their house had established, with a view to procure that peace to his descendants, which they could not hope to enjoy, but by depriving the Alians of all means of forming a party. By degrees the disturbances on this account seemed to be at an end; but it was no more than the effect of the profoundest dissimulation, to which the Caliph, as will appear in the sequel, became a sacrifice.

The Ommiyans are displeased at it.

OMAR II.
Hegyra 100.
Ch. ær. 719.

The revival of the enterprize against the Greeks quieted for a time the animosity of the Ommyyans against the Caliph. That prince entertained hopes of better success in the undertaking than his predecessors had met with, and with that view he caused most extraordinary preparations to be made.

The Mussulmen again besiege Constantinople without success.

When the proper season of the year for taking the field was come, he caused Merwan, his general, to march towards Constantinople, at the head of a very formidable army. Merwan invested the city, and pushed on his attacks with great vigour. But the Greeks made a most gallant defence, and the besiegers lost a considerable number of men. The syrian general, apprehending the siege would be a work of time, wrote to the Caliph for a supply of troops and provisions. Four hundred ships of war, well provided, were forthwith sent under the command of Dehac; and Merwan received advice that this powerful succour would be disembarked on the coasts of Thrace.

But, unhappily for the Saracens, the grecian emperor also gained intelligence of the arrival of this reinforcement, and took proper measures to render it useless. Leo the Isaurian still possessed the throne. That prince, who from a common soldier had raised himself to the empire by means of his courage and intrepidity, gave fresh proofs of his bravery and experience; and after having destroyed the whole force of the Sa-

racens

racens the preceeding year, he was equally successful on the present occasion.

OMAR II.
Hegyra 100.
Ch. ær. 719.

Leo caused the mussulman fleet to be attacked in the midst of the hurry and confusion of the disembarkation. Many of the syrian ships, which was then left without a proper force to defend them, were taken by the Greeks; and the fire-ships having been sent out amongst the rest of the saracen fleet, great part of them were burned, and very few ships escaped falling into the hands of the enemy.

This event spread a terror amongst the troops employed in the siege. But Merwan dispelled their fears, and even prevailed upon them to carry on the works with the same zeal and courage as they had shewn in the beginning; telling them, he was persuaded the Greeks could not long hold out, and that the intrepidity they affected to make appear, was, as it were, no more than the last gasps of their expiring valour.

But by a succession of fresh misfortunes the Syrians lost all courage. Merwan, finding that all the provisions he was able to recover from Dehac's fleet would last but a short time, sent out a large detachment towards the city of Nice, in Bithynia, hoping there to procure a full supply. But this step proved very fatal. Whilst the detachment was upon the march, it was discovered by some grecian lords, who had abandoned their castles to secure themselves in the mountains.

OMAR II. tains. These lords being of opinion, that if
 Hegyra 100. their vassals would join them they should be
 Ch. ær. 719. strong enough to attack the Saracens, dis-
 patched express messengers to the several
 villages, desiring the inhabitants to take up
 arms. The villagers complied, and joining
 in a body, marched under the command of
 the nobles, who formed an ambuscade in a
 place through which the saracen detachment
 was forced to march, and the Syrians were
 attacked unawares, and cut in pieces.

On the other hand, the Grecian ships that
 guarded the streights which form the com-
 munication between the sea of Marmora and
 the Black Sea, gave a free passage to the
 vessels that carried provisions to the besieged ;
 but they at the same time kept the syrian
 ships in awe, who were afraid of coming
 near them since they had felt the fatal effects
 of the greek fire. All provisions being there-
 fore cut off, a terrible dearth ensued, but
 they still continued the siege. They strug-
 gled a long time with famine, and endea-
 voured to appease it by eating their horses,
 camels, and other beasts of burthen : pesti-
 lence, the usual concomitant of famine, arose
 in their camp, and the infection was even
 communicated to the besieged. The Caliph
 having received advice of the dismal con-
 dition to which his troops were reduced,
 ordered Merwan to raise the siege, which had
 proved so destructive, and to return with
 the army into Syria.

But

But the same fatality attended them in OMAR II. their return, as had accompanied them in their Hegyra 100. former operations. They had the elements Ch. ær. 719. to struggle with: lightening fell on them, and they were assailed by furious storms of wind during their whole passage. Great part of their ships were wrecked, and only about fifteen of the fleet were able to reach their port, and those in a very shattered condition.

The Caliph, enraged at so great a loss, attributed the misfortune to his easiness in granting many privileges to the Christians. Omar persecutes the Christians. He resolved therefore for the future to treat them with the utmost severity, and subject them to the observation of many customs used by the Mussulmen. He accordingly prohibited them from drinking wine, and eating certain meats forbidden by the mahometan law; he increased their taxes one half, and ordered that their testimony should no longer be admitted in the disputes they might have with Mahometans.

But the great disappointments the Caliph Hegyra 101. had met with in this enterprize, had not the Ch. ær. 720. least influence on his conduct towards the Mussulmen; he still governed them with the same tenderness and moderation as he had shewn at his accession to the crown: and when any disturbances arose, or even any insurrection happened, far from acting with so great rigour as the most part of his predecessors had done on such occasions, he used his utmost endeavours to appease the
authors

OMAR II.
Hegyra 101.
Ch. ær. 720.

Shuzib's re-
volt, on ac-
count of the
suppression of
the maledic-
tion against
Ali.

authors and promoters of them, and to bring them to a due sense of their duty by peaceable means.

A Mussulman of great note, called Shuzib, having revolted on account of some opinions touching the law of Mahomet, the Caliph's counsellors advised him to send out a body of troops, and punish the rebel; but Omar, unwilling that any blood should be shed about a difference in opinion, declared there was no occasion to carry matters to such extremities, and that he was in hopes of extinguishing the rebellion by using other methods.

He wrote a letter to Shuzib, and desired him to come to court, and dispassionately argue the matter with him: "If you want nothing more," said the Caliph to him in his letter, "than a reformation of religion and the state, come to me, and relate your grievances, and I will use my utmost endeavours to remove them, without noise or further trouble."

Shuzib had already gone so far, that he dared not appear before the Caliph, fearing that he should at least be severely reprimanded, or might be perhaps even punished for his revolt: he therefore sent in his stead two men of his party, whom he could rely on, with orders to treat with the Caliph on his behalf.

The deputies appeared before Omar, and could alledge no other grievances on the part of their principal, than the Caliph's late conduct in respect to the Alians: for as to what related

OMAR II.
Hegyra 101.
Ch. ær. 120.

related personally to him, they owned there was not the least cause of complaint, and that the whole world acknowledged him to be a most equitable prince. But they represented to him, that as he was of the house of Ommiyah, many persons had taken great offence at his suppressing the form of malediction, which his predecessors had commanded to be used in the mosques, at the time of publick prayer, against the enemies of his family. They added, that this step had induced mankind to believe he openly condemned the Ommiyans, and therefore it was not doubted but he would command that the same anathema should for the future be used against them, as had been so long fulminated against the Alians.

Omar, amazed to find that a bare difference in opinion could set men at variance, and drive them to take such desperate measures, answered with great mildness: "As what you require of me relates not to this world, but to the world to come, I think I should commit a great sin in granting your request. It does not appear that God commanded his prophet to curse any person whatsoever: nor does it appear, that we ought either publicly or privately to curse any man, even though to our knowledge he should lead a most profligate life. Pharaoh, who was so presumptuous as to arrogate to himself divine honours, was not publicly cursed. As therefore you acknowledge me
to

OMAR II.
Hegyra 101.
Ch. ar. 720.

Shuzib demands that Yezid should be excluded from the throne.

to be just and equitable, how can you suppose I will curse the Ommiyans, who are my relations; who are of the same religion with me, and who observe all the fasts, and obey all the precepts, prescribed to Mussulmen?"

The deputies were silenced by this answer. They then came to another point, which was one of the main pretexts for their rebellion: it was concerning the succession to the empire. When the last Caliph appointed Omar to reign after him, he at the same time named Yezid to be Omar's successor. Now, that young prince being a man of the vilest character, Shuzib and his adherents were resolved to exclude him from the throne. "My lord," said the deputies to Omar, "surely a prince so equitable as you are, will not at your death leave us for your successor so impious and irreligious a man, as he that is appointed to come after you, only that you may perform a promise which was as it were forced from you at the time you were raised to the throne?"

The Caliph, who well knew Yezid's disposition, was moved at their remonstrances: however, he strove to pacify the deputies, by representing to them, that the event in question was yet at a great distance; and as to what might afterwards happen, they ought to trust providence. "My lord," replied the deputies with great warmth, "we all know Yezid, and tremble to think what will become of the empire in the hands of such a prince."

Omar

Omar was so struck at this discourse, that he was unable to make any reply. He dropped some tears, and resuming the conversation, he told the deputies, that he must take a few days time to consider what they had offered to him, and that he would soon return them his answer; after which he dismissed them.

OMAR II.

Hegyra 101.
Ch. ær. 720.

The publick was soon made acquainted with all that passed at this conference. The Ommiyans were alarmed, fearing that the Caliph, who was dissatisfied with them on account of the disturbances they raised at the time the anathema against Ali was suppressed, might take advantage of Yezid's ill conduct, to exclude him from the throne, and perhaps might transmit the crown to another family. They therefore held a council on the present posture of their affairs; and the result was that the Caliph should be taken off without delay, that he might not have time to put in execution the measures they were so apprehensive of.

Hegyra 102.
Ch. ær. 721.Conspiracy
against the
Caliph.

They executed their base design by the help of one of the Caliph's slaves whom they corrupted. The wretch undertook to give his master the poison they put into his hands; and he administered it in some liquor, the fatal effects of which were soon made manifest.

An arabian author says, that the Caliph refused to take any remedy to expel the poison; and that one of his friends having earnestly pressed him to use proper means for his

OMAR II.
Hegyra 102.
Ch. ar. 721.

his cure, that prince answered him: "I am so resigned to the will of the Almighty Being, and so thoroughly persuaded that his decree, as to the term prescribed for the life of each man, is infallible and inevitable, that I would not raise my finger to rub my ear, though I should be assured it would effect my cure."

This uncommon resignation brought him to the grave. He died, after having reigned about two years and a half, and being in the 39th year of his age. He was buried near the little town of Maharat, in a place formerly called the monastery of St. Simeon.

Arabian writers concur in acknowledging his great virtues: above all, they praise him for his mercy, modesty, and disinterestedness. He always wore very plain garments, even on days of the highest ceremony.

Mojushon, an author famous on account of his visions, asserts, that he saw Omar in paradise, lying in Mahomet's bosom, having Abubecre on his right hand, and Omar the first on his left; that being astonished at the preference given to Omar-ebn-Abdolaziz over the two first Caliphs, he asked an angel the cause of it, and the angel answered, that Abubecre and Omar the first, had exercised justice, and fulfilled the law in the primitive times, and in the days of zeal for Mussulmanism; but that Omar-ebn-Abdalaziz excelled them all in merit, having exercised the same virtues amidst a corrupt and unjust age.

Y E Z I D II.

The FOURTEENTH CALIPH.

YEZID, the son of Abdolmelik ascended the throne immediately after the death of Omar; but he did not imitate him either in point of modesty or prudence. He seemed in all his actions to take a pride in running counter to the conduct of his predecessor, whom he never mentioned but with obliquy, and with a view to blacken his memory. He dismissed from the court, all such as had enjoyed the least share of Omar's favour; and deprived of their government all such as he had appointed to preside over the provinces.

YEZID II.
Hegyra 102.
Ch. ær. 721.

In the first year of his reign great broils happened in Arabia, which were occasioned by a famous captain also named Yezid, the son of an eminent Mussulman named Mahaleb, who derived his pedigree from the princes of Laristan, a little province in Persia. Those princes, and Mahaleb after their example, had signalized themselves by their bravery and intrepidity: Yezid, who possessed the valour of his ancestors, declared war against the Caliph, and at the head of his army entered arabian Irak, where he was joined by a numerous party.

Yezid-ebn-Mahaleb excites a revolt in Arabia.

Though the Caliph had not the least talent for war, yet he extricated himself on this occasion in a more advantageous manner than

YEZID II.
Hegyra 102.
Ch. ær. 721.

could have been expected. He did not indeed attempt to command his troops in person, but appointed to that office one of his brothers, named Musleimah, who behaved on that expedition with equal courage and conduct. He beat the enemy, and totally routed them. But several bloody actions first passed in which he was always victorious; though the advantages he gained were not always equally great. In the first battle Yezid-ebn-Mahaleb was killed on the spot, after having long strove for the victory. His brother, named Moawiyah, immediately took the command of the army, and made head against the Arabians as long as he possibly could; when he found the fire of his soldiers began to flag, and that they were greatly disheartened by the loss of their chief-officers, he attempted to make a retreat, and took the road to Ormus, in hopes of saving the remainder of his troops. But the governor of that place having heard of the blow they had received, would not open his gates to them; thus Moawiyah was forced to seek another asylum. Musleimah, who closely pursued him, and who had killed him a great many men in divers encounters which happened during the retreat, continually harassed him as far as the river Indus, where there happened a conclusive action; and Moawiyah having been killed at the first onset, the remainder of his troops were easily cut in pieces by the Arabians.

The

The Caliph's arms were also very successful against the Turks, who had over run Asia, and penetrated as far as Aderbijan which is the ancient Media. The same Musleimah gained a compleat victory over them, and drove them out of the Caliph's dominions.

YEZID II.
Hegyra 102.
Ch. ær. 721.
Success of the
Saracens
against the
Turks.

The Saracens were greatly elated by these repeated advantages, and induced to carry their arms into the southern provinces of France, which they entered, after having made themselves masters of great part of Spain. They took the city of Narbonne by surprize, and made it their head quarters. They then advanced to Thoulouse, and laid siege to it; but Eudes, earl of Aquitain, marching up to them with a numerous army, forced them to raise the siege: and continually pursuing and harassing them, he defeated their army near Narbonne, retook that city from them, and finally drove them out of the dominions of France.

Hegyra 103.
Ch. ær. 722.
They make
an irruption
into France,

Whilst the Caliph's generals were earnestly labouring to maintain the glory of the nation at the head of numerous armies, that prince who was naturally indolent and sensual, passed his time with his women, and left to his courtiers the care of the state.

Amongst the women, his usual companions were two for whom he entertained a violent passion: the one was named Sélamah, the other Hababah. One day, when that prince was walking with them in a pleasant

Cause of the
death of the
Caliph.

YEZID II.
Hegyra 103.
Ch. ær. 722.

garden belonging to him, which lay near the Jourdan, he was diverting himself with throwing grape stones at a distance, which Hababah caught in her mouth with great dexterity. (It must be observed that the grapes of Palestine, are much larger than those of Europe.) This sport continued some time, when at last one of the stones stuck in that fair favourite's throat, and choaked her, so that she died in the Caliph's arms.

Yezid was afflicted beyond expression at this melancholy accident. Nothing was capable of diverting the excess of his grief; on the contrary, he indulged it more and more. Vain were the preparations they made to pay the last duty to the remains of that unfortunate woman, in order to take from out of his sight the object of his grief; he would not permit them. He ordered her body to be carried to his chamber, where he shut himself up for eight whole days, to feast his eyes with that horrid spectacle. The stench of the carcase, which filled the whole apartment, being insupportable to all that were obliged to attend there, the Caliph was forced to consent to its being removed, on the representation of his officers, who declared they could not possibly serve him if he kept the body longer.

It was hoped that time and the absence of the object, would put an end to his sorrows, but they became more excessive; and he was so unreasonable as to order the body of

of

of that woman to be taken out of the ground, and brought back to him. But no person would obey the order, and he dared not insist upon it. The violence of his affliction threw him into a consumptive illness, of which, having languished a short time, he died, and according to his own command, was buried in the same grave with his beloved Hababah.

HESHAM.
Hegyra 103.
Ch. ær. 722.

Shortly before his death he appointed Hesham, one of his brothers, to be his successor; and he directed that after his brother's death the crown should descend to his own son Waled, who was then too young to wield the scepter.

H E S H A M.

The FIFTEENTH CALIPH.

HESHAM-ebn-Abdolmelik was not at Damascus when his brother Yezid died; but notwithstanding his absence he was solemnly proclaimed Caliph; and immediately after his proclamation a deputation of some of the principal syrian lords was sent to deliver to him the royal scepter and ring. And this was the first news he received of his brother the Caliph's death, and of his own accession to the crown.

HESHAM.
Hegyra 104.
Ch. ær. 723.

In a few days he departed from Raspha, a city in Syria, the place of his usual residence,

HESHAM.
Hegyra 106.
Ch. ær. 725.

Zeid profe-
cutes his
claim to the
Caliphate.

dence, and arrived at Damascus, where he took possession of his new dignity, and received the homage of his subjects.

In the beginning of his reign a dangerous rival appeared, who raised great disturbances, and caused him much uneasiness. It was Zeid, Hosein's grandson, and who was consequently great grandson to Ali, the prophet's son-in-law. So soon as he received advice of Yezid's death, and Hesham's proclamation, he went with all speed to Cufah, where he had then a strong party of friends. He held long conferences with them, and after great debates on the present situation of affairs, they judged they had now a favourable opportunity of driving the Ommiyans from the throne, which they held only by usurpation; and they resolved to proceed in their design without delay, that the new Caliph might not have time to fix himself on the throne.

He is pro-
claimed Ca-
liph at Cufah.

They forthwith raised Zeid to the Caliphate, and took the oath of allegiance to him. The Cufians, who were still fond of broils and revolutions, with a kind of enthusiastick eagerness, embraced this opportunity of signalizing their inconstancy and perfidy. They proclaimed him Caliph, and gave him all the proofs of obedience that a sovereign could expect from the most loyal subjects.

As the ancestors of Zeid had fallen a sacrifice to the treacherous behaviour of the Cufians,

Cufians, he ought to have been on his guard, and not have founded his hopes on appearances ; but in all probability he flattered himself that he should be able to preserve the affections of those people, whose frequent defections he rather attributed to the imprudent management of others, than to their own natural inconstancy.

HESHAM.
Hegyra 106.
Ch. ær. 725.

Thus was he dazzled by an ignis fatuus, which he mistook for a permanent flame ; and he was more firmly persuaded of the sincerity of their intentions, when upon a proposal being made for the immediate raising a body of troops to guard against the Ommiyans, (a step which prudence required to be taken) more than fourteen thousand almost instantly appeared, and offered to follow his standard.

Their offer was accepted, and Zeid appointed generals to command them : all necessary preparations were made for taking the field ; and the new Caliph appointed a council to govern the state whilst he should be absent to oppose the enemy at the head of his troops.

All this great preparation served to open the rebellion, but in no wise contributed to its success. The Caliph of Syria was not put to the trouble of taking up arms to crush this insurrection in the bud ; that piece of service was done him by the Arabians who remained true to his interest ; and he heard not the least news of the mo-

HESHAM.
Hegyra 106.
Ch. ær. 725.

Joseph pre-
vails on the
Cufians to a-
bandon Zeid.

tions of the rebels, till he at the same time received advice that their party was broken and utterly dispersed.

Joseph-ben-Amrou, governor of Basorah, having been informed of the transactions at Cufah, caused some strong detachments to march thither, commanded by able officers, whom he furnished with proper instructions. His design was that Zeid's person should be secured before he was in a condition of defending himself; and in order to succeed in that enterprize without noise or much bloodshed, he ordered them to take all opportunities of insinuating themselves to the confidence of some of the leading men of Cufah, and to endeavour by dint of argument or promises to bring them over from the party of Zeid.

This expedient was as successful as Joseph could wish: his offers met with a favourable reception: the first that came over prevailed on others to follow his example. They then began to reflect on the risque they should run in carrying on a rebellion which would, sooner or later, prove the destruction of the Cufians. In short, after mature deliberation, the greatest part of those who had been so forward in taking up arms, immediately laid them down, and promised they would in no wise assist Zeid: thus the party of that unfortunate Mussulman, who had been so lavish of their offers and promises to procure him the crown, re-
fused

fused him the least assistance to prevent his falling into the hands of those that came to seize him. In a word, instead of fourteen thousand men who had agreed to sacrifice their lives and fortunes in his cause, he had no more left than about twelve friends, who resolved to die in his defence.

HESHAM.
Hegyra 106.
Ch. ær. 725.

Though Zeid was thus abandoned, yet he resolved to resist his enemies: not that he could hope to escape from those who were come to arrest him; but he chose rather to defend himself to the last gasp, than to be made prisoner, in which latter case he foresaw he should be put to a shameful death.

So soon as Joseph's men appeared he retired, with his few friends, to a place where he might sell his life as dearly as possible; and he was so persuaded he should soon die, that he cried out as he was going thither; "I am now in the very same situation Hosein was:" and indeed he shared the same fate with that illustrious Mussulman his grandfather. For having defended his life a long time, with a slaughter of a great number of his enemies, he received a desperate wound on the head which disabled him from making any further resistance. Of this wound he died in a short time, and was buried the same day at Cufah.

Death of
Zeid.

Joseph was well pleased with the success of his enterprize, but he was sorry his men had suffered Zeid to be honourably interred. He forthwith sent an order to dig up the body,

HESHAM.
Hegyra 106.
Ch. ær. 725.

body, and hang it on the common gallows, as an example to all such as were rebelliously inclined. And he then sent an express to Damascus, with a particular account of the whole transaction. The Caliph returned him thanks, such as so important a service merited; and commanded him to burn the body of Zeid, that not the least traces of his rebellion might remain. Ahias, the son of that rebel, made his escape from Cufah, to avoid the pursuit of the Caliph's friends, and took refuge in the town of Balk, situated in the country of Turkestan.

But whilst they were employed in exterminating the party of the Alians, there arose another more formidable, or, at least, more successful party, which after several attempts, at first attended with no great success, at last raised itself to the Caliphate on the ruins of the house of Ommiyah.

Hegyra 109.
Ch. ær. 728.
Rise of the
Abassian party.

The party I mean, was that of the Abassians, so called from Abbas the son of Abdolmotaieb, Mahomet's uncle. Abbas, who strongly opposed his nephew in the beginning of his mission, became afterwards one of his most zealous followers; and was held in so great esteem by his countrymen, that in general they paid him almost as much respect as they shewed to the prophet himself. It is even related that the Caliphs Omar and Othman the first, never met him without giving proofs of the utmost veneration for him;

him ; and that when they were on horse-back, they instantly alighted to salute him. HESHAM.
Hegyra 109.
Ch. ær. 728.

The descendants of Abbas had always refused to acknowledge the Ommiyans as lawful Caliphs, and considered them only as usurpers and tyrants, against whom they plotted without ceasing. The Princes of that family had already raised many seditions, in which several of them lost their lives, as well in the reign of Omar the second, as in that of his successors, and particularly of Hesham, whose generals were very active in falling on the rebels. But all their diligence and force were not sufficient to destroy them ; they were checked for a while, and then made their appearance again with fresh vigour.

It does not appear that Hesham much stirred himself during these commotions. Indeed, if some alterations he made in the government of the provinces are excepted, historians have not mentioned a single fact relating to the share he had in the management of affairs, that is worthy observation.

They say, in general, that this prince was a man of great parts, and an able statesman ; that he was active, vigilant and laborious ; but they at the same time describe him to be an avaricious man, and one who unjustly deprived others of their goods, to employ them oftentimes in ridiculous expences. Hesham's
character.

El Makin, an Arabian author, relates, that never Caliph was possessed of so much tapestry,

HESHAM.
Hegyra 109.
Ch. ær. 728.

tapestry, or of so many robes and garments of all kinds as Hesham. “ We are told in history,” says he, “ that six hundred camels were employed to carry his wardrobe, and that he left a thousand girdles, and ten thousand shirts.”

Notwithstanding the avarice for which Hesham is so highly blamed, he had sometimes humours which put him to an immense expence. He was in particular remarkably fond of horses ; and bought all that were offered to him, provided they were good and beautiful. He kept four thousand of them in a grand stable he built for that purpose. In the upper floor of the building were lodgings for the servants and grooms, appointed to look after his horses.

His stables and his wardrobe were therefore the two chief articles of his expence. As to the rest of his money, he locked it up in his treasury, of which he alone kept the key. He must have had immense sums in bank ; for El Makin, the author already cited, alledges, that this prince had seven hundred farms, two of which in particular, were let at the yearly rent of twenty thousand drachms.

The expence of his table was extremely moderate, and yet it was very plentifully served, not at his own expence, but by means of presents he received. Those that had once given, were under a kind of obligation to continue the practice, and if they
failed

failed of their usual generosity, he found means to refresh their memories; in doing which he condescended to actions infinitely beneath a sovereign. For example, a governor of a place having sent him a large basket full of peaches, the fairest and finest in the province, the Caliph wrote him a letter of thanks for the present, and at the same time desired he would repeat it. "I received," said he, "the peaches you sent me: they were very fine, and admirably well flavoured: I desire you will forthwith send me some more; and pray be careful to fasten well the basket, that none of them may be stolen from me."

HESHAM.
Hegyra 109.
Ch. ær. 728.

Another officer having made him a present of a large quantity of truffles, some of which were spoiled, Hesham wrote to him in the same strain with the former letter. "Do not fail," said he, "to send me some more without delay; but put them in sand, that they may not touch one another, for by rubbing many of them are spoiled in the carriage."

It is related to the honour of this prince, that he was a strict observer of his word, and that he was very careful that every article he entered into, either in his treaties with the enemies of the state, or his engagements with his own subjects, should be punctually performed.

He was equally exact in the performance of all religious duties, and was the first that
appeared

HESHAM.
Hegyra 109.
Ch. ær. 728.

appeared at the place of publick worship. It is reported on this head, that his son having one day missed coming to publick prayers, he tartly reprimanded him for it; and the young prince having alledged in his excuse that his servants had not brought his equipage soon enough, Hesham sternly replied; "Then you should have come on foot; and I prohibit you from coming in any other manner during a whole year." The young prince did not murmur at the order, but submitted to it with a docility suitable to his mild disposition.

Bad inclinations of Waled.

But Waled, Hesham's nephew, and presumptive heir to the crown, was far from being so tractable. He had given himself up entirely to debauchery, and shewed an utter contempt for all religious matters. His uncle had often seriously remonstrated to him on that account, but it produced no other effect than to give him a disgust for the court, which he soon quitted to go and confine himself to a house he had in the country, where he led a most dissolute life with a number of young rakes whom he chose for his companions. There he impatiently waited for the death of his uncle, who was lately become very infirm.

The long wished for moment soon came. The Caliph, who resided at Raspha, dragged on a painful life. He visibly declined; and was reduced to such extremity that they thought him dead. Two messengers were forthwith

forthwith sent to Waled, to acquaint him with the news, and to pay him homage. That prince could not at first be prevailed on to believe them. As he knew the Caliph did not love him, he suspected it was a snare laid for him by Hesham, by means of which he proposed to destroy him for having seized on the Caliphate in his life time. But the deputies having confirmed the truth of the fact on oath, he was convinced; and thinking himself already on the throne, he forthwith sent some of his friends to Damascus, with orders to take possession of the royal treasure in his name.

HESHAM.
Hegyra 109.
Ch. ær. 728.

This order was speedily put in execution. And when they found the Caliph was not dead, as had been supposed, they were filled with fear. However he fell into such repeated fainting fits, that during the few days he lived, he was in continual agony. Being a little recovered from one of the fits, he ordered one of his officers to go to Damascus, and take out of the treasury a certain sum of money, which he intended to dispose of before he dyed; but the persons that were in possession of it by order of Waled, would not suffer them to take it; and they refused with the more boldness, as they had nothing to fear from the dying Caliph. Hesham, who was naturally covetous, was greatly grieved to find he had nothing left in this world. "O God," cried he, "have I been then

Hesham's
death.

HESHAM. then only a keeper of the treasure for Waled? these were the last words he spoke : soon after which he expired.

Hegyra 125. Ch. ær. 728. So soon as he was dead, Aiyad, his secretary, took the keys of the treasury, and carried them to Waled. The rest of the officers without delay proceeded to plunder the house. Which they so effectually performed, that when, according to the custom of the Orientals, they prepared to wash the body of Hesham previously to his funeral, they could find none of the utensils necessary for paying him that last duty : insomuch that had it not been for one of his freed-men, named Kaleb, who provided a winding sheet, that prince, who was so rich, and so uncommonly fond of having all things in abundance, would have left this world in as great want as the most wretched of his subjects.

Hesham died at Raspha, in the 125th year of the Hegyra, and in the 742d year of the christian æra, having reigned about twenty years. He left two princes, one named Soliman, the other Moawiyah, of whom mention will be made in the sequel of this history.

Fresh irruptions of the Saracens into France.

During his reign the Saracens made a fresh irruption into France, under the conduct of a famous captain, named Abdalrahman, by Arabian writers, and by French historians called Abderame. Eudes, duke of Aquitain, who by the assistance of France had repulsed them in the inroads they

they had already made on his territories, HESHAM.
 was disturbed by the French themselves, Hegyra 125.
 who disputed his title to his dominions. Ch. ær. 742.

Eudes, being thus exposed to an attack from the French, and being apprehensive of a fresh irruption of the Saracens, entered into an alliance with one of their celebrated leaders, called Munuza, who was then governor for the Caliph in Puicerda, a country bordering on the Pyrenean mountains: and Eudes so artfully managed his negotiation with the governor, that he won him entirely to his interest, and prevailed on him to declare against the Caliph and his generals.

The more to strengthen the alliance, the duke of Aquitain gave his daughter in marriage to the Saracen governor, who promised to guard her against all insults from the Caliph's troops. Eudes, having nothing to fear from that quarter, undertook some expeditions against the French, and was beaten more than once by Charles Martel, who was then mayor of the palace, and prince of the French.

Abdalrahman, taking advantage of that juncture to make a fresh irruption, was stopped in his progress by Munuza, but that obstacle was soon removed. Abdalrahman defeated the governor, and pursued him even to Puicerda, whence he was obliged to fly. He endeavoured to take refuge with Eudes, his father-in-law, but

HESHAM.
Hegyra 125.
Ch. ær. 742.

Abdalrahman pursued him so briskly, and harassed him so greatly, that he could not effect it: insomuch that Munuza, finding himself on the point of falling into the victor's hands, chose rather to put an end to his own life. His wife, who was a woman of great beauty, was taken prisoner by Abdalrahman, who immediately sent her to the Caliph.

That general having afterwards entered Gascony, made himself master of Bourdeaux; and passing the river Dordogne, he offered battle to the duke of Aquitain. That prince having made a peace with Charles Martel, might have avoided the misfortune that befel him, if he would have waited for the succours which the French were sending him. But, thinking himself strong enough to face the Saracens, he joined battle with them, and his troops were put to a total rout. He fled to Charles Martel, who had marched with his army to his assistance, and was advanced as far as the river Loire.

Abdalrahman, flushed with these repeated advantages, pursued the duke of Aquitain; and committed terrible ravages in Perigord, Saintonge, and Poitou. He was preparing to put all to fire and sword in the city of Tours, when Charles Martel, having come up to him in a plain near that city, prevented him from advancing any farther. The two armies remained seven days in fight
of

of each other ; the first six days passed in skirmishes, the one hotter than the other ; but on the seventh there was a general action, in which the Saracen army was almost cut in pieces, Abdalrahman himself falling in the field of battle. This signal victory raised the courage of the Europeans, who were now made sensible that the Saracens were not invincible. Historians commonly place this defeat in the 114th year of the Hegyra, and in the year of our Lord 732.

HESHAM.
Hegyra 125.
Ch. ær. 742.

The Saracen
army is de-
feated.

Some years afterwards, that is to say, about the 736th year of the Christian æra ; the Saracens re-entered France, and invaded the country of Avignon, and many considerable places in Languedoc. Charles Martel again defeated them, and re-took all the places that had fallen into their hands.

This warlike people, far from being discouraged at so great losses, made a fresh irruption into France two years afterwards, and ravaged the territory of Avignon, and great part of Provence. But they were a third time routed by Charles Martel, who drove them out of all their conquests.

W A L E D II.

The SIXTEENTH CALIPH.

W A L E D II.
Hegyra 125.
Ch. ær. 742.

THE reign of this Caliph contains nothing memorable, either in respect to the Arabians in general, or to that prince in particular, who seems to have ascended the throne only to disgrace it, by his irreligious and scandalous life.

In his early youth he gave great hopes ; and it is related, that in the first part of the reign of his uncle Hesham, he acted with great prudence and wisdom. He showed neither pride nor ambition, nor even any great love for pleasure. As he was modest, sweet-tempered, affable, studious, and a lover of retirement, he was looked on as a pattern of virtue, and his future subjects flattered themselves he would one day prove an honour to his crown, and the darling of the nation.

Waled's impiety.

But all these good qualities insensibly disappeared. Hesham, who loved that young prince as if he had been his own child, had always an eye upon him, and was highly grieved to find him thus swerving from his duty. He gave him some wholesome advice, which he made a shew of complying with ; but it did not produce any good effect : Waled continued his irregularities. Depravity

vity of manners soon led him to irreligion and impiety; he spoke of the Koran with contempt; and it is asserted, that he one day even trod it under his feet, in the presence of a company of young gentlemen, who were the officers of his household.

WALID II.
Hegyra 125,
Ch. ær. 742.

The Caliph, who had till that time treated him with great indulgence, could not help severely reprimanding him for so profane a deed. The prince answered the Caliph with all the insolence of a man hardened in wickedness; and that he might no more be troubled with such lectures, he quitted the court, and retired to a country called Arzak, where he resided till the death of Hesham.

There he gave a free course to his inclinations, and wallowed in lust and debauchery; and this he did the more openly, as he was accompanied only by young nobles, who, either through libertinism, or in hopes of making their court to the presumptive heir to the crown, did all in their power to indulge his passions, and promote his irregularities.

His debauchery.

Though the Caliph was minutely informed of all that passed at Arzak, he was unwilling to use Walid with severity; he only sent for some of his lewd companions, and threatened he would punish them most severely, if they were any longer accessory to his leading so shameful a life. But this served only to render Hesham more odious than ever to

Waled II.
Hegyra 125.
Ch. ær. 742.

Waled and his companions, whose chief conversation was when the happy moment would come, that would free them from an impertinent censor, and raise to the throne a prince, from whom they might expect the greatest rewards, and highest honours.

As soon as that time came, Waled departed from Arzak, and came to Damascus, to take possession of the throne. He was proclaimed with great pomp, and as by his long absence from the court, his vices were concealed, at least from the knowledge of the multitude, he was raised to the throne with the consent of the people, and the approbation of the major part of the nobility, who expected to find that prince the same virtuous man he appeared to be at the time he resided at Damascus, before he retired to Arzak.

He renders
himself con-
temptible in
the eyes of
his subjects.

But the new Caliph soon shewed what he really was. The prince being then sure of impunity, (which is a kind of appurtenance to royal dignity) threw off all reserve and decency. His debaucheries were so frequent, so scandalous, and so public, that they rendered him contemptible in the eyes of his subjects. Even his own relations could not help condemning his conduct, which gave so great offence through the whole empire. They were no strangers to the depravity of his heart, but they hoped he would at least have preserved appearances; and that out
of

of regard to the dignity of his rank, he would have deferred the gratification of his base inclinations, till he had no other witnesses of his conduct than those who were his usual companions in iniquity.

Waled II.

Hegyra 125.

Ch. ær. 742.

But Waled was above acting with such caution; his common discourse was excessively licentious; he paid not the least regard to modesty, and as to the duties enjoined by his religion, he totally neglected and despised them; not that he had taken a liking to any other faith, for he held all religions equally in contempt, and followed no one in particular.

However, he performed the pilgrimage to Mecca; and he exposed his character in a country where before he was only known by name. Though he could not be ignorant that wine and dogs were equally prohibited by the mahometan law, he carried a great number of hounds with him, and made splendid entertainments, in which he doubly offended his subjects, both by drinking wine, and by drinking it to great excess.

He offends
the people of
Mecca.

It is an invariable rule amongst the Musulmen, that women should never enter their mosques, but perform their prayers in the porches. Waled infringed that law, to please one of his concubines: he caused her to be disguised, and not only brought her into the mosque, but suffered her to read the prayers in his stead.

WALED II.

Hegyra 125.

Ch. ær. 742.

This shameful action was not immediately discovered; and perhaps it had never been known, if the Caliph had prudently kept his council: but he had no relish for wickedness, unless he could make his boasts of it, and he ridiculously gave the Mussulmen to understand in what manner he had imposed on them; by which means he himself contributed to increase the aversion they had already entertained for him.

It may easily be supposed, that under such a prince, the business of the state must be extremely ill managed: he would have have thought every moment lost, that he must have spared from his pleasures to attend on the affairs of government. He therefore intirely trusted to his ministers, who, in concert with his abandoned favourites, managed all things at their pleasure, without the least regard to law, or the wholesome customs of the nation.

The people
loudly com-
plain against
him.

These united grievances raised violent murmurs, and soon produced bitter complaints: they were strongly backed by the Caliph's relations, and above all by Yezid his cousin, who took advantage of these disturbances to form a strong party.

The Caliph was openly condemned for his debaucheries, and publicly treated as a person who was equally a scandal to the throne, and to religion. It was said, without the least scruple or reserve, that his shameful actions made all good Mussulmen
groan

groan in spirit; and that the courtiers, his base companions, had poisoned the morals of the people by their loose conversation, and the horrid maxims they propagated.

WALID II.
Hegyra 126.
Ch. ær. 743.

These complaints, which were so freely uttered by all persons, inspired Yezid with the most sanguine hopes of succeeding in the design he had formed to seize the throne. He at first proposed only to depose Walid; but reflecting that a deposed monarch would always be able to make the usurper uneasy in his new dignity, he resolved to get rid of him, being persuaded that no person would attempt to revenge the death of so contemptible and detested a prince.

Yezid, having therefore maturely weighed the design, resolved to put it in execution without delay. He armed the conspirators, and putting himself at their head, he marched to the palace, and forced the outer gates, after a sharp dispute with the guards. This attack raised a great tumult, which soon reached the Caliph's ears. Walid, finding his person was in danger, armed himself, and stood on his defence, with part of his courtiers. The conspirators having forced their way into the farthest apartments, fell with great fury on the Caliph, who made a stout resistance, and shewed much more bravery than was expected from him: but having long stood his ground, he was at last borne down by numbers, and slain.

He is slain
by conspirators.

Thus

Waled II. Thus fell the unhappy Waled, who is
 Hegyra 126. represented by historians as a prince addicted
 Ch. ær. 743. to all kinds of vice, without the least tincture
 of virtue.

His character. El Makin hath left us this particular de-
 scription of Waled: "He was," says he,
 "of a middle size, fair, and of a handsome
 countenance; his hair began to grow grey.
 As to his disposition, he was impious, de-
 bauched, preposessed with false opinions,
 and given up to all sorts of vices: but he
 was a great poet, and an able orator. In short,
 his whole study was how to refine upon
 pleasures, and pass his time agreeably."

This Caliph died in the 126th year of the
 Hegyra and the 743d year of the Christian æra,
 having reigned about fifteen months, and
 being then about forty-two years old.

Death of
 Ahias, the son
 of Zeid. In the beginning of Waled's reign, Ahias,
 the son of Zeid, was put to death. He re-
 volted against Hesham, (as has been already
 mentioned in the history of that Caliph)
 and having taken refuge in the city of Balk,
 immediately after his father's death, he con-
 cealed himself there almost sixteen years:
 but he was at last discovered; and as it was
 the interest of the Ommiyans to destroy all
 such as might raise any disturbances in fa-
 vour of the house of Ali, they condemned
 him to die. He was hanged on a cross; his
 body was burned, and the ashes thrown into
 the Euphrates.

Y E Z I D

Y E Z I D III.

The SEVENTEENTH CALIPH.

YEZID was son of Waled, the first of YEZID III. that name, grandson of Abdolmelik, Hegyra 126. and cousin-german to Waled the second, Ch. ær. 743. (the last Caliph) whose crown he usurped, and whom he put to death.

The new Caliph was proclaimed without the least opposition. His predecessor had so embittered the minds of all his subjects, that they were pleased to find themselves freed from so odious a monster; and tho' he attained the crown by assassinating his relation, it was so far from being imputed to him as a crime, that he thereby gained the votes of the leading men in Syria, who voluntarily came to acknowledge him for their sovereign, and took the oath of allegiance to him.

But things were not carried so smoothly in the other provinces of the empire, where they seemed to threaten an approaching storm. Yezid was soon informed of the posture of affairs, and took wise measures, by which he allayed the great fermentations arising in the minds of some of his subjects; which were by so much the more dangerous, as they were grounded on the specious pretext of revenging the death of a monarch,

The people rise against the Caliph.

basely

YEZID III.
Hegyra 126.
Ch. ær. 743.

basely assassinated by a faction, whose chief had by their assistance usurped the throne.

The principal reason he had to fear that the pretended avengers of the death of Waled would have recourse to arms, was, that they were headed by a captain named Merwan, who was formidable, not only on account of his bravery and experience, but thro' the pretensions he might form, as he was descended from the house of Ommyyah. It is true, he was only a collateral branch of the reigning family; but that was sufficient to entitle him to dispute the crown, and even to attain it, if fortune should second the attempts he was in a condition to make.

Yezid extricated himself from this difficulty like an able politician; he did not attempt to argue with the mutinous people, who are seldom capable of hearing reason: his sole view was turned towards the chief; and he wisely judged, that by gaining him over, the rest of the faction would soon disperse.

The Caliph
dissipates the
rebels, by
gaining over
their chief.

In consequence of that resolution, he entered into a treaty with Merwan; and after some conferences, he prevailed on him to quit the party, in consideration of the government of Mesopotamia, one of the best governments in the empire, which he bestowed on him. The rebels, being deprived of their head, and being at a great loss for a proper person to supply his place, insensibly

bly dissipated, and the impending danger was averted.

YEZID III.
Hegyra 126.
Ch ær. 743.

Yezid had not the same success in his undertaking against the Emeffians, who had thought fit to put on the deepest mourning after Waled's death. The Caliph gave them to understand that he was displeased with their conduct, and that it would be prudent in them to lay it aside. The Emeffians paid no regard to the intimation. Yezid enraged at their obstinacy, sent a body of troops to compel them; but the attempt did not succeed. On the contrary, the Emeffians marched out of the city in order of battle, killed three hundred of the Caliph's soldiers, and drove the rest of the detachment to the very borders of their country.

The Emeffians persist in their revolt.

It does not appear that this affair, which was unsuccessful in the outset, was attended with any bad consequences; and, indeed, the Caliph had not time to undertake any considerable enterprize: he only, as it were, made his appearance on the throne, and died, after having reigned five months and some few days.

Death of the Caliph.

El Makin who gives a description of this Caliph, says, that as to his person he was lean, and middle sized, and that his complexion was tawny, and his beard thin. As to his mental qualities, the same author adds, he was a man of good understanding, and that he expressed himself with equal grace and energy. He was likewise a scrupulous

IBRAHIM.
Hegyra 126.
Ch. ær. 743.

pulous observer of his word, and did strict justice to all that appeared before him. They gave him the surname of Al-Nakés, which signifies, “Bad paymaster;” by reason, that having been in great want of money, he lowered the pay of the soldiery, which his predecessor had considerably augmented.

I B R A H I M.

The EIGHTEENTH CALIPH.

IBRAHIM.
Hegyra 127.
Ch. ær. 744.

IBRAHIM, brother to the preceding Caliph, ascended the throne immediately after the death of that prince. His reign was still shorter than his predecessor's, for he enjoyed the crown only two months and a few days. He was scarce seated on the throne, when Merwan rose up in arms, and endeavoured to drive him from it. It has been shewed that Merwan had already revolted from Yezid, and was pacified by being appointed governor of Mesopotamia. Being possessed of a government of so great importance, he was enabled to resume his former design. That prince, having gained the love and esteem of the people under his command, immediately made considerable levies of men and money, and formed a numerous body of troops, whom he kept under the strictest discipline. He pretended that he had no other view in making these extraordinary

extraordinary preparations, than to repel the enemies of the state, and in particular the Alians, whose party, though often crushed, rose again out of its own ruins, and was continually hatching fresh designs against the reigning monarch.

IBRAHIM.

Hegyra 127.

Ch. ær. 744.

Though Merwan feigned to have the good of the Ommiyans so much at heart, yet he did not scruple to attack Yezid; and he took up arms against the successor of that prince, who was of the house of Ommiyah, as well as Merwan himself.

That ambitious prince, who was now desirous of bringing his grand project to a conclusion, and of placing the crown upon his own head, took advantage of the weakness of the newly-elected sovereign, to represent to the people, that the Caliph, being destitute of the talents necessary to support the dignity of his station, the enemies of the Ommiyans would certainly attempt to destroy that house, and would cause the crown to go into another family: that it was therefore incumbent on them to depose the Caliph, without delay, and to set up in his stead some one of the Ommiyans who had understanding, courage, and strength enough to raise the glory of that name, which had been greatly sunk by the want of merit and talents in most of the last Caliphs.

Merwan solicits the people to proclaim him Caliph.

These remonstrances were effectual. His proposal met with great applause, and, warm with concern for the glory of the Ommiyans, they

IBRAHIM.
Hegyra 127.
Ch. ær. 744.

they told Merwan, they knew not any man of the family so fit to appear with dignity on the throne, as he; and there was no need of further deliberation. That as he had under his command an army so devoted to his service, he ought instantly to take the field, and bring about, without delay, so desirable an event. Merwan, who was delighted to find the train had so well taken, immediately began his march towards Damascus.

The Emef-
sians proclaim
him.

As he passed by Hems, he was proclaimed Caliph by the inhabitants of that city, who also gave him a reinforcement of troops to assist him in his enterprize: after which he continued his march to Damascus.

Merwan de-
feats Ibra-
him's army.

Ibrahim was no sooner informed of this terrible insurrection, than he raised forces with all possible speed, in order to march up to his enemy, and give him battle. He was soon at the head of fourscore thousand men, with which he went forth against the rebels. But the army consisting of troops raised in haste, undisciplined, and unprovided of a good leader, was of little use to the unhappy Ibrahim. However, he boldly stood his ground, and shewed more valour than could be expected: but the brave Merwan easily routed this raw disorderly multitude. Ibrahim, finding all was lost, resolved to retreat, and went and shut himself up in Damascus.

Merwan,

Merwan having pursued him, soon appeared before the city. He was preparing to form the siege, when the inhabitants opened their gates to avoid the horrors of being plundered, and surrendered at discretion. Merwan immediately took possession of the place; and the first step he took was solemnly to depose the Caliph. That affair passed without the least tumult, and Ibrahim was reduced to the necessity of leading a private life. In consequence of which they gave him the surname of al-Maklu, that is to say "The deposed." Thus ended the Caliphate of that prince, after a duration of two months, and fifteen days.

MERWAN II.

Hegyra 127.

Ch. ær. 744.

Ibrahim is deposed.

Authors are divided as to the time Ibrahim lived after his degradation. Some say he was killed at the end of three months: on the contrary, others assert that he did not die till five years afterwards, in the 132d year of the Hegyra.

M E R W A N II.

The NINETEENTH CALIPH.

MERWAN, the second of that name, was the son of Mahomet, and great grandson of Merwan the first. And consequently belonged to the illustrious house of Ommiyah.

MERWAN II.

Hegyra 127.

Ch. ær. 744.

Surname

given to Merwan.

That prince, who was one of the greatest captains of the age, was capable of raising the glory of his family by his bravery and intrepidity, of which he had given proofs from his most early youth; but principally since he got footing in Mesopotamia. They gave him the surname of al-Hemar, that is to say “The afs,” a name, which did not signify a stupid heavy nature, like that animal, but on the contrary denoted the vigour, strength, and courage of the general, whom they called so. It was an allusion to the asses of Mesopotamia, where those animals are large, robust, indefatigable, and fit to be made use of amidst the din of war, at which they are not terrified; for which reason they gave Merwan the name of al-Hemar, and commonly used to say of that prince, “The afs of Mesopotamia will never turn his back on the battle.”

That illustrious captain, who had received from the hands of nature a noble, generous, magnanimous heart, was filled with indignation when he reflected on the mean pusillanimous and abandoned lives of some of the last Ommyians who had possessed the throne. Animated with a desire of restoring to his family the lustre with which they had been formerly adorned, he resolved forcibly to take the crown from princes who did not deserve to wear it; and in placing the diadem on his own head he proposed to convince the whole mussulman empire that they had at last

last a sovereign worthy to command them. MERWAN II. Hegyra 127. Ch. ær. 744.
 But by a strange contrast, the cause of which is only to be found amidst the mysterious decrees of that Being who dispenses crowns, principalities and dominions at his will and pleasure, the Ommiyans who had always flourished under weak, and wicked princes, met with their ruin under the government of one of the greatest sovereigns that ever filled the throne. In a word, he was the last of the dynasty of the Ommiyans. The crown was taken from them for ever, and was placed on the head of the rivals to that family.

After Ibrahim's defeat, Merwan entered Damascus in triumph; deposed that prince, Merwan is proclaimed Caliph in all the provinces. (as has been already said,) and was immediately proclaimed Caliph in his stead; Egypt, Syria, Mesopotamia, and the rest of the provinces, followed the example of Damascus: they acknowledged Merwan to be their sovereign, and seemed disposed to afford him assistance to secure him in the possession of his new dignity.

And that prince had great need of it; for he was disturbed during his whole reign by a succession of wars, factions and commotions, which continued till his death. He had enemies, not only amongst the Alians, but even amongst the Ommiyans, some of whom took up arms to punish him for his usurpation, and avenge the death of Ibrahim.

MERWAN II.

Hegyra 127.

Ch. ær. 744.

He destroys
those that re-
fuse to ac-
knowledge
him.

Hakem and Othman, both of them sons of Waled, raised forces and attacked Merwan. They were soon punished for their presumption; the Caliph defeated them and took them prisoners; and that he might have nothing to fear from those princes, who seemed strongly inclined to oppose him, he put them both to death.

Hegyra 128.

Ch. ær. 745.

He beats So-
liman, and
takes him
prisoner.

He was equally successful against Soliman, son of the Caliph Hesham, who had given him battle at the head of a numerous army. Merwan obtained a compleat victory over his troops, cut more than six thousand of them in pieces, and took Soliman prisoner. This latter had a proof of the Caliph's generosity, who granted him his life, so soon as he had acknowledged him to be Caliph. However he kept him prisoner; and when he departed from Damascus to go to Harran, a city of Mesopotamia, where he usually resided, he carried with him Soliman and Ibrahim, whom he had also imprisoned after his deposition from the Caliphate. History makes no more mention of the latter, who passed the rest of his days in such obscurity, that it is uncertain, (as I have already observed) whether he died three months after his confinement, or whether he lived till the 132d year of the Hegyra. El Makin follows some other authors, and says, Merwan made him suffer the death of the cross.

As

As to Soliman, though Merwan was far from confining him strictly, and gave him the fairest promises that he would not put him to death, that prisoner could not trust the Caliph. Inraged to see Merwan on a throne to which he thought he had a much better title, as descending lineally from a prince who possessed it before the Caliph, he could no longer bear to continue at his court. He secretly fled with a few faithful friends, and went to a famous Alian, called Ibrahim ebn Mohammed, who had been acknowledged by the sect of Ali, and that of the family of Abbas, otherwise called Abassians, to be Imam or chief pontiff, a dignity in which he succeeded Mahomet his father.

MERWAN II.

Hegyra 128.

Ch. ær. 745.

Soliman escapes, and

joins Ibrahim's party.

Soliman and his train greeted Ibrahim in that quality, and further they acknowledged him to be Caliph, and took the oath of alleigance to him. Soliman then introduced to that prince the officers who had followed his fortune, and caused him to take particular notice of a famous Mussulman named Abu Muslim, and said of him to the new Caliph, "That I may give you an unquestionable proof of the uprightness of my intentions, I present to you this officer, whom I have prevailed on to quit Merwan's service, in order to follow my example."

This Abu Muslim was a prince of the race of Ommiyah, who had gained a high reputation at Merwan's court. Though he was still young, the Caliph had raised him by

He prevails on Abu Muslim to quit the Caliph.

MERWAN II.
Hegyra 128.
Ch. ær. 745.

sudden degrees to the most eminent post in the army, and had bestowed on him the government of Mesopotamia, one of the best in the whole mussulman empire. It is not said what inducements he had to quit the court of Syria, without regard to the interest of his family, and in breach of that gratitude he owed to his relation and benefactor, to whom he was indebted for his great preferment. The insinuations of Soliman, it seems, got the better of his sense of honour: Abu Muslim suffered himself to be led astray, and entered into the service of the Abassians. Ibrahim received him with the greatest marks of distinction, and appointed him governor of Chorasan.

Hegyra 129.
Ch. ær. 746.

Great readiness of the rebels to support Ibrahim.

So soon as it was known in Arabia that Soliman and Abu Muslim had quitted the party of the Ommiyans, and joined the Alians and Abassians, who were fast friends to Ibrahim; a great number of Mussulmen came to Hunain, where he usually resided, to offer their services; and as he was not in a condition of appearing in a manner suitable to his dignity, each of them contributed a considerable sum of money to enable him to make a proper figure. As there was no mosque at Hunain, they even built one there. In short, Ibrahim was soon surrounded by a numerous and splendid court, and wanted nothing but a good army to oppose so formidable a rival as the Caliph of Syria.

Ibrahim,

Ibrahim, instead of bending all his views on so important a point, imprudently shewed a greater desire of appearing with pomp and ceremony amongst the people of Arabia. He resolved on going a pilgrimage to Mecca, and gave early notice of his design, that all his followers might have time to make suitable preparations on the occasion. He entered that city with a numerous train, a great number of carriages, camels, and beasts of burthen, which were loaded with all sorts of provisions. In a word, nothing was wanting that could serve either for shew or convenience; but they unfortunately had omitted to provide a strong body of troops to escort the caravan on its march.

MERWAN II.

Hegyra 129.

Ch. ær. 746.

He goes on a pilgrimage to Mecca.

Merwan, who had his spies in all parts, was informed of the journey at the very time it was first proposed, and before it was resolved on. He forthwith sent an express from Harran, where he then resided, to Damascus, with orders for the governor to send out a flying camp of chosen troops, and cause them to form an ambuscade on the road from Mecca to Hunain. This order was executed with the utmost expedition; however the syrian troops did not arrive at the place appointed, till Ibrahim and his retinue had reached Mecca.

Hegyra 130.

Ch. ær. 747.

The commander of the syrian detachment had therefore full time to prepare the ambush, in order to attack the caravan on its return; and he acted with so much prudence

The caravan is dispersed, and Ibrahim taken prisoner.

MERWAN II. and caution, that his design remained a profound secret. Ibrahim and his train having left Mecca to return to Hunain, the Syrians who waited for them at the pass, sallied out, and furiously falling on the company, who were almost defenceless, they put to the sword all such as made any resistance, and totally dispersed the remainder.

Ibrahim was taken prisoner on this occasion: Merwan was very desirous of getting him into his power; and therefore he had given strict orders, that in case of resistance, they should spare Ibrahim's person, and use their utmost endeavours to take him alive. The attendants of that Imam were therefore the only persons who suffered in this attack. For after the slaughter of some of the chief officers of his court, they seized him, and did not trouble themselves to pursue the fugitives.

This illustrious prisoner was forthwith conducted to Harran, and brought before the Caliph, who ordered him to be immediately put in chains, and carried to prison. Ibrahim foresaw his destruction was inevitable, however he was less affected at the loss of life, than on account of the disturbances which he feared would arise amongst the Alians and Abassians, if he should die without naming a successor. On the other hand, he was filled with grief to see the Ommyans in quiet possession of the throne, whilst there were still princes of his race subsisting,

sisting, who were able to dispute for, and even to deprive them of the throne.

MERWAN II.
Hegyra 130.
Ch. ær. 747.

Full of these ideas, Ibrahim, though loaded with chains, resolved to appoint a person to succeed him. The steps he took for that purpose are not certainly known, but some authors relate that he found means to write to his brother, and acquainted him with his condition; and they further add, that he entreated him to prosecute his claim to the Caliphate which was his birth right, and in the same letter nominated him to be his successor.

Ibrahim appoints Abul Abbas to be his successor, and he is acknowledged.

This letter was faithfully given to Abul Abbas, who communicated the contents of it to his brother's followers, and to all the friends of his family in general. They deplored Ibrahim's unhappy fate, in falling into the hands of such an enemy as Merwan; but unwilling to loose time in useless lamentations, which would be particularly so in the present juncture, they immediately proceeded to the inauguration of Abul Abbas: and the Abassians sideing with them, likewise proclaimed him Caliph, at Cufah, with the greatest solemnity; and that the new Imam might not be subject to the same misfortune as had attended his brother, they raised a considerable body of troops for the security of his person.

Hegyra 131.
Ch. ær. 748.

During these commotions in Arabia, Merwan was considering in what manner he should deal with Ibrahim. Some of the Caliph's

MERWAN II.
Hegyra 131.
Ch. ær. 748.

Caliph's friends advised him only to condemn him to perpetual imprisonment, because that by putting his competitor to death, as he seemed inclined to do, he would run the risque of an insurrection of the whole party. But Merwan remonstrated to them, that if he should detain that Imam in prison, all Arabia would rise up in arms to procure his liberty; whereas his death might put an end to the dispute, and consequently to the rebellion.

Merwan puts
Ibrahim to
death.

He therefore resolved to put Ibrahim to death; and the only question was, what kind of death he should die: for as the blood of the Imam of their church, was held to be sacred in the eyes of the people, Merwan, to avoid being charged by them with having spilt it, pitched upon a particular kind of punishment. Some say he ordered Ibrahim to be drowned; others, that he caused his head to be thrust into a sack of quick lime, which soon stifled him.

Ibrahim, at his last moments, made no secret of the means he had used to stir up a rival against Merwan, capable of finding him full employment, and of taking open vengeance for his cruelty. He therefore declared that he had appointed his brother Abul Abbas to be his successor, and doubted not but he was in the actual possession of that dignity.

This menacing declaration had no effect on Merwan. He considered it only as the effect

effect of despair, and entertained not the least apprehension that any ill consequence could ensue ; but things took another turn. The party of the Abassians, far from being terrified at the cruel treatment which the Caliph had bestowed on their Imam, were furiously enraged against Merwan, and loudly cried out, that the death of Ibrahim must be avenged : that in punishing him the Caliph had infringed the laws, and that it was high time to restore to the lawful heir a crown which the Ommiyans had possessed only by usurpation.

MERWAN II.
Hegyra 132.
Ch. ær. 749.

The people
rise at this
execution.

The party of Abul Abbas was greatly increased by means of these clamours, and in a short time he was joined by a great number of malecontents ; who expressed the utmost readiness and desire to march under his standard, and hazard their lives and fortunes in his service.

Whilst these formidable enemies of the Ommiyans were making preparations at Cufah, another foe appeared in Persia, who assumed the title of Caliph. According to some he was called Zulcimin, others give him the name of Soliman : But however that was, though the new Caliph was a man of an indifferent character, and had not much courage or military skill, he artfully raised a considerable party, seducing the people by propagating amongst them a specious doctrine, and excellently well calculated to succeed.

Zulcimin
causes a re-
volt in Persia.

He

MERWAN II.

Hegyra 132.

Ch. ar. 749.

He maintained that man was free-born, that liberty was a natural and primitive law, and therefore slaves, and other servants had a right, or rather were under an obligation of shaking off the yoke, and even of destroying their masters, if they refused to embrace the doctrine he preached.

His new doctrine gains him many followers.

Maxims so favourable to the multitude, soon raised great commotions; there was almost a general insurrection of the slaves in Persia; and each man strove to put himself under the protection of a sovereign who set himself up as the restorer of the rights and privileges of humanity.

Zulcimin appoints Cathibad to be general of his forces.

Zulcimin finding himself at the head of a prodigious number of troops, which had been raised upon the credit of his doctrine, began to think of making use of them; and as he knew, and confessed he was unfit to command in person, he had at least prudence and discernment enough to nominate a general of consummate valour and experience. He had then with him the famous Cathibad, a captain who did such signal services to the Ommyians, during the Caliphate of Waled the first. For what reason he quitted their party, and joined Zulcimin, does not appear; but it is certain he served him with the same zeal and fidelity, as he shewed when he bore arms for the Ommyians.

Merwan was soon informed of the disturbances that prevailed in his Empire, as well

well in Persia, as in Arabia. He remained undaunted at the news, being firmly persuaded, that by means of his own courage, and the assistance of his troops, he should be able to subdue the rebels. He also founded great hopes on his enemies being divided, some of whom favoured the Caliph of Cufah, and others sided with the Caliph of Persia. Presuming from this division, that he might beat them seperately, he resolved to begin with Zulcimin, and attack him with an army of one hundred thousand men; this army was commanded by a famous general named Iblin, an officer, in the opinion of Merwan, the most capable of opposing Cathibad.

MERWAN II

Hegyra 132.

Ch. ær. 749.

Merwan
sends an army
against him.

The two generals equally pleased to find an opportunity of signalizing themselves, soon came in sight of each other. Merwan's army was stronger, that is to say, more numerous than the troops of Zulcimin; but the superiority did not prevent Cathibad from being the first to attack: the first onset was so furious, that it absolutely decided the battle; Iblin was defeated, and his troops so totally routed that he could not possibly rally them.

The Caliph's
army is de-
feated.

This advantage was followed by another, almost equally considerable; Iblin having assembled the broken remains of his army, and received a strong re-inforcement from Merwan, was resolved to stand another brunt with Cathibad, in hopes of wiping
out

MERWAN II. out the disgrace of his former defeat. But
 Hegyra 132. he was routed in this action also; the success
 Ch. ær. 749. of which cost the enemy somewhat dear,
 as they lost their general. Cathibad was
 mounted on a fiery horse, that ran away with
 him, during the heat of the battle, towards
 the Euphrates, and the river having over-
 flowed, he fell into a deep ditch, where he
 could receive no assistance, and was drowned.

Death of Ca-
 thibad.

Abdallah ra-
 vages Me-
 sopotamia.

Whilst Merwan was employed in facing
 the troops of Zulcimin, he was at the same
 time obliged to defend himself against the
 attacks of a formidable enemy, who had
 taken up arms in support of the right and
 title of Abul Abbas, Caliph of Cufah. It
 was the famous Abdallah, the son of Abbas,
 uncle to the Imam Ibrahim, and also to
 Abul Abbas, and Abu Giaffar. The rea-
 son for his appearing in arms was, that he
 might avenge the death of the Imam, his
 nephew, and secure the Caliphate to the
 two others, by raising them on the ruins of
 the house of Ommiyah, whose destruc-
 tion he had sworn. He therefore appeared
 on a sudden in Mesopotamia, and ravaged
 part of the province.

Though Merwan had already full em-
 ployment in taking care of affairs in Arabia,
 and managing the war actually carried on
 against Zulcimin, he nevertheless took the
 field with a numerous army, to fight, or at
 least to check Abdallah, and prevent the
 utter

utter ruin of the province, into which he had just made an irruption.

MERWAN II.

Hegyra 132.

Ch. ær. 749.

The Caliph advanced to Mossul, a city of note in that country, and pitched his camp in the plain of Tubat, at a small distance from the place where Abdallah's army then lay. Merwan having set out a party to reconnoitre the enemy, he came to a resolution of remaining quiet, till he received news of the army commanded by Iblin, which was then in sight of the enemy. The Caliph therefore strongly intrenched himself, to prevent a surprize, and proposed to regulate his motions by the good or bad success of his forces in Persia.

The Caliph marches in person to oppose him.

He soon heard of the unhappy fate of his troops. Intelligence was brought to him that they were totally routed; that Iblin, his trusty general, was killed in the action, and that Yezid, who assumed the chief command after his death, had perished almost at the same time. This fatal news filled him with grief, however resuming all at once his wonted courage, he resolved to march out, and meet the victorious enemy. This step was become in some measure necessary, for he received advice that Zulcimin, in order to take advantage of the ardour of his troops, had put himself at their head after the death of Cathibad, and was advancing by speedy marches, proposing, by his defeat, to crown the victory he had already obtained. Fearing therefore that he should be

He goes to meet Zulcimin.

MERWAN II.
Hegyra 132.
Ch. ar. 749.

be attacked on the one hand by Zulcimin, and harassed on the other by Abdallah, who was not far off, he determined to go and meet that enemy, who was coming to seek him: and he was the more firmly persuaded he should gain an easy conquest over him, both from a consideration of the disorders and irregularities which commonly arise amongst troops after a signal victory, and also from the mean opinion he entertained of Zulcimin's bravery.

He is defeated.

But he was greatly disappointed in his hopes: the two armies having met, Zulcimin forthwith made a brisk attack on him, and pushed it with so much vigour, that Merwan's troops were broken several times. Spight of all the Caliph's endeavours, his men gave ground in all parts; and had it not been for the wise precautions he took, his whole army would have been cut in pieces. For when he found the enemy resolved to give him battle, he instantly threw a bridge over the river Zaban, which was in his rear, and by that means secured a retreat, which saved his life, as well as the lives of a great part of his forces.

It is certain that the extream weariness of the enemy contributed greatly to Merwan's safety; for if they had not been weak and faint with fatigue and slaughter, and if they could have pursued the Syrians to the river, they would have put all that remained to the sword, or so harassed them in passing
the

the bridge that in the hurry and confusion of the rout, they would for the most part have thrown themselves into the river, and perished in the waters. But fortune, who had still some further calamities in store for Merwan, seemed to favour him in this melancholy extremity, he therefore got together the remains of his defeated army; and immediately caused the bridge to be destroyed, to prevent the enemy from following him. Zulcimin on his part was contented with his present advantage, he gave his troops some time to rest themselves on the field of battle, and shortly afterwards marched back into Persia, firmly believing that after such a blow, Merwan would not dare to give him any further disturbance.

MERWAN II.
Hegyra 132.
Ch. ær. 749.

But the Caliph soon found means to recruit his army. Considerable reinforcements arrived from Syria, and the adjacent parts; and he was in a condition of attempting to make amends for the disgrace which the fortune of war had caused him to suffer. However, as Zulcimin was retired, Merwan did not think it advisable to pursue him; he chose rather to march against Abdallah, who was still ravaging Mesopotamia. The forces of the latter were divided into two bodies, one of which was commanded by Abdallah in person, and the other was headed by Abu Muslim.

He returns to
Mesopotamia
with fresh
troops.

Merwan resolved immediately to march against the body commanded by the lieu-

Hegyra 133.
Ch. ær. 750.

MERWAN II. tenant of Abdallah, in which design he was
 Hegyra 133. seconded by all the friends of the Ommiyans,
 Ch. ær. 750. who were eager for an opportunity to punish
 Abu Muslim, who being one of their own
 family, had basely quitted their party, and
 joined the Abassians.

This step was not attended with a more
 favourable issue than the former : but it was
 owing to a very singular event, which plainly
 shewed that fortune was the wretched Mer-
 wan's inveterate enemy. The two armies
 being in sight of each other, the Caliph
 went aside a moment, and mounted an emi-
 nence to view the order, appearance, and
 number of the enemy, as well as the situation
 of the ground.

All things seemed favourable to his de-
 sign ; in consequence of his discoveries he
 proposed to make a certain motion with
 part of his troops, by means of which he
 promised himself a sure victory. But before
 he rejoined his army, having occasion to
 alight for a moment, as he was getting off
 his horse, his cimeter fell from the scab-
 bard, and his steed being affrighted at the
 noise it made in falling, galloped away full
 speed without his rider to the syrian army.

His troops
 disperse them-
 selves.

The Caliph instantly foresaw the fatal im-
 pression this accident would make on his
 troops : and indeed they no sooner saw the
 horse arrive without his master, than they
 concluded the Caliph was either killed or
 made prisoner. On a sudden the syrian
 troops

troops were seized with a pannaic; in vain did the officers attempt to remove their fears; terror and affright had so got the mastery of this great army, that they broke into several bodies, which dispersed on all sides as interest or inclination led them.

MERWAN II.
Hegyra 133.
Ch. ær. 750.

The Caliph was a witness to this strange confusion, without being able to remedy it: however he did all that lay in his power to prevent the fatal consequences of such a disorder. He ran up to his troops and strove to rally them; but neither prayers, remonstrances or menaces had any effect on their fear-struck minds; and he was at last glad to find a horse in order to make his escape with the multitude.

Abu Muslim, highly pleased at an event by which he had gained so easy a victory, would not take the trouble of cutting the flying enemy in pieces; he only sent out a detachment of light horse to augment their terror and confusion. There was in fact no need of a greater number of troops to compleat the destruction of the syrian army, and Merwan had no other remedy left but to go and shut himself up in Damascus, which being the capital of his dominions, might have afforded him a sure asylum against the attempts of his enemies.

But to add to his misfortunes, his own subjects refused to let him take shelter in his capital. Being terrified at the accounts they received that Abdallah's army was making

Damascus refuses an asylum to the Caliph.

MERWAN II. forced marches towards Damascus, and that
 Hegyra 133. the place would soon be invested, they re-
 Ch. ær. 750. presented to him, whom however they still
 acknowledged to be their sovereign, that as
 they were not in a condition to oppose the
 enemy, they would not ridiculously and un-
 seasonably hazard their lives and fortunes;
 that they were resolved to open their gates
 to the conqueror, and that he must depart
 without delay, unless he had a mind to fall
 into their hands.

This was a fatal blow indeed. However,
 though Merwan severely felt it, he did not
 sink under the burthen of his misfortunes.
 That great captain took the only step that
 remained in so fatal an extremity; he de-
 parted from the city in the night time with
 his treasure and all his most valuable effects:
 he was accompanied by some of his relations,
 and a few friends and courtiers who had
 courage and honesty enough to share his
 fortune.

Hegyra 134
 Ch. ær. 751.

He retires
 into Egypt.

He retired into Egypt with all his follow-
 ers; he flattered himself that being sovereign
 of the country, he should find there a suffi-
 cient number of friends to enable him to re-
 establish his affairs, or at least to stand his
 ground in that province. And indeed he
 had reason to be satisfied with the conduct
 of the Egyptians; they received him with
 the greatest readiness, and seemed heartily
 inclined to afford him all the assistance in
 their power. He now began to enjoy a
 little

little repose, and he must have been thoroughly sensible of the value of it after the great adverse fortune he had experienced.

MERWAN II.

Hegyra 134.

Ch. ær. 751.

But the fated moment was come : vain would have been his hopes of future happiness ; wretchedness was to be his companion even to the grave. Saleh, Abdallah's brother, who had been commanded to pursue him to Damascus, had given his troops some time for rest and refreshment in the neighbourhood of that city. From thence he sent advice to his brother, of Merwan's retreat into Egypt, and informed him that if he would speedily send a reinforcement of troops, he doubted not but he should arrive there soon enough to attack the Caliph before he had time to establish himself.

Abdallah was too much interested in the entire defeat of Merwan, and the total extermination of the Ommyians, to omit any means of bringing about so desirable an event. He therefore sent to Saleh the succours he required, and that general immediately began his march towards Egypt.

Saleh goes to attack him.

Merwan came boldly out to meet him at the head of a body of troops, whose ardour and zeal seemed to promise him success in the enterprize. And as it was the first time that Saleh had commanded a numerous army in chief, the Caliph was in hopes he would commit some fault, of which he might easily take advantage ; but Merwan's great experience stood him in no stead on this occasion.

Hegyra 134.

Ch. ær. 752.

Merwan is defeated,

MERWAN II.
Hegyra 134.
Ch. ær. 752.

Saleh made a most furious attack on the Egyptians; the resistance served only to cause the slaughter of a greater number of them; and at last, after a very long and very bloody action, fortune declared in favour of the young general, who obtained a compleat victory over a prince that was confessedly the greatest warrior of the age.

Merwan's
death.

The unhappy Merwan, after having performed amazing feats of valour, perished, together with many of his chief officers: the body of the Caliph having been found amidst a heap of slain on the field of battle, they cut off the head and sent it to Abdallah. Thus fell Merwan, whose generosity and greatness of soul equally appeared in prosperity and adversity. He died in the 134th year of the Hegyra, and in the 752d year of Christ. He was the last of the dynasty of the Ommyians, which had subsisted ever since the 41st year of the Hegyra, that is to say about the space of 93 years.

That Caliph left two children; as to their fate authors greatly disagree: it is asserted by some, that one of his sons retired into Spain, and founded there the monarchy of the Ommyians: and that the other established himself in Arabia Fælix. On the contrary, El Makin says, that Merwan's eldest son was killed in Æthiopia, to which country he had retired; and that the other, after having suffered a long imprisonment,
at

at last gained his liberty, and in a short time died at Bagdat, where he was buried.

MERWAN II.

Hegyra 134.

Ch. ær. 752.

The dynasty of the Ommiyans was followed by another, called in history the dynasty of the Abassians, which owed its rise and establishment to Abdallah the vanquisher of Merwan. He placed on the throne the princes of that name, and secured to them the possession of the crown, by the inhuman methods he used, (as will herein after be made appear) totally to exterminate the house of Ommiyah.

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